

A. EFIMOV AND N. FREIBERG

# HISTORY

THE EPOCH  
OF INDUSTRIAL  
CAPITALISM

TEXTBOOK  
FOR MIDDLE SCHOOLS



S T A T E  
TEXTBOOK PUBLISHING HOUSE

MOSCOW 1934

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## THE EPOCH OF INDUSTRIAL CAPITALISM

TEXTBOOK FOR MIDDLE SCHOOLS

*Seventh and Eighth  
years*

TRANSLATED BY G. CLARK  
EDITED BY E. SAUNDERS

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## CHAPTER 1.

### THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION IN ENGLAND IN THE LATTER HALF OF THE 18th CENTURY.

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#### § 1. The Pre-Requisites for the Industrial Revolution.

Contemporary capitalist society with its large machine industry, shops and factories, with its sharp division into two basic classes, with contradictory class interests — the bourgeoisie and the proletariat — was formed as a result of the *industrial revolution*, which took place at various times in the various countries of Europe.

The industrial revolution took place first of all in England. English capitalism achieved tremendous successes in its development in the course of the 16th and 17th centuries. Commerce, industry and the agricultural economy of England made big strides during this period. A rich and politically influential bourgeoisie grew up.

In the middle of the 17th century a bourgeois revolution took place in England — the Great English Revolution (1642—1653) which was climaxed by the revolution of 1688. As a result of this revolution a number of feudal remnants interfering with the development of capitalism were eliminated and a political order was created which insured, to a sufficient degree, the predominance of the bourgeoisie. Following the bourgeois revolution, the capitalist development of England proceeded still more rapidly.

**Primitive Accumulation.** «The historic pre-requisite to the genesis of capital» wrote Lenin, «are first; accumulation of a considerable sum of money in the hands of individuals living under conditions in which there is a comparatively high development of commodity production. Second, the existence of workers who are «free» in a double sense of the term: free from any constraint or restriction as regards the sale of their labour power; free from any bondage to the soil or to the means of production in general — i. e., of propertyless workers, of proletarians who cannot exist except by the sale of their labour power». Thus, before capitalism could be born, a special historic process, which Marx called «primitive accumulation», had to take place. It was primitive accumulation because it appeared, not as a result of the capitalist means of production but at its starting point; it preceded that capitalist accumulation which takes place in the factory where the capitalist appropriates surplus value through the exploitation of the hired worker.

Primitive accumulation was carried out by the ruling classes by means of the most brutal and forceful methods, marked by a robbery of the toiling masses unprecedented in the history of mankind. The



plundering of colonies, the expropriation of the landed property of the peasants, the exploitation of small producers — of artisans and handicraftsmen — by merchants and manufacturers — such were the main sources of this «accumulation». Let us see how this phenomenon took place in England.

#### **The Plundering of the Colonies.**

At the end of the 15th and at the beginning of the 16th centuries, new countries across the ocean were discovered by the Europeans — South and North America, — and new sea routes to India and China were found. The immediate consequence of this was the seizure of the majority of these countries by the European states, their transformation into colonies, and the plundering and exploitation of their population. In the beginning Spain and Portugal took first place among the colonial powers of Europe. However their colonial supremacy was not of long duration. Poorly developed industrially, they surrendered their place to Holland, France and England. England came out victorious in a stubborn competitive struggle for the colonies which took place in the 17th and 18th centuries between these three countries. A greater part of North America, India and numerous islands on various oceans came into its possession. The English colonial companies seized the monopoly on the entire trade with these transoceanic countries driving back all of their competitors. The colonies provided the English capitalists with a colossal income. The largest monopolist English Company, the East Indian, began its trade in the year 1600 with a capital of £ 68,373 and already in 1708 its capital had increased to £ 3,163,000. Its yearly profit reached 40%. The Company ruled, uncontrolled in India. It carried on wars against the native princes, coined money, established a monopoly on all the most profitable branches of trade in India (rice, cotton, opium, etc.). The East Indian company also held in its hands the trade with China.

Trade in Negro slaves was another not less profitable form of the English colonial robbery. As expressed by Karl Marx, the English merchants transformed Africa into a «hunting ground for the black man», systematically supplying Negroes for the American plantations. In the beginning of the 18th century England secured the monopoly on the supply of slave labour power to Spain and its colonies in South America.

Already in 1776 it had 500,000 slaves in its own North American colonies. The largest English port, Liverpool, became rich and developed tremendously on slave trade. In 1730, fifteen Liverpool ships were engaged in slave trading and in 1792—one hundred thirty two ships. Thus «the treasures», secured beyond the boundaries of Europe through robbery, enslavement of natives and murder, were flowing into the metropolis<sup>1</sup> and were transformed into capital (Karl Marx).

As a result of the unheard of profits from colonial trade-plundering and slave trade, gigantic sums of unutilized money were accumulated in England in the middle of the 18th century. The monopolist companies and individual capitalists readily lent money to the English government, receiving on their loans high interest rates,

<sup>1</sup> *Metropolis* — this is the term used for countries possessing colonies.

which were later paid through increased taxation imposed upon the people. Very successful subscriptions were carried on for all sorts of new enterprises of a colonial-trade character which frequently were spurious and led to bankruptcy. The capitalists were ready to invest their money in any business which promised them any kind of a dependable profit.

### **The Expropriation of the Peasantry.**

The dispossessing of the peasants from the land played a particularly large rôle in primitive accumulation. «In the history of primitive accumulation, — wrote Marx, — «all revolutions are epoch-making that act as levers for the capitalist class in the course of formation, but above all those moments when great masses of men are suddenly and forcibly torn from their means of subsistence and hurled as free and unattached proletarians on the labour market.»

The expropriation of the peasants from their land constituted that great forceful revolution («the agrarian revolution») which tore the masses of small peasant producers from their own means of production and proletarianized them, preparing in this way a reserve army of labour for the future manufacturers.

English economy beginning with the end of the 15th century was undergoing a radical change due to the deep penetration of capitalist relations. With the development of English foreign trade, more and more wool was exported, especially to Flanders (at present Belgium). Further a large amount of wool was necessary in order to satisfy the demand of raw material for the English textile industry. On the other hand, the growth of industry in the cities demanded an ever greater quantity of bread, meat, skins, butter and other farm and dairy products. The raising of sheep in the 15th and 16th centuries was already considered a profitable enterprise which was rapidly drawing in both landowners and the richer peasants. But the transition to sheep raising, just like the intensification of agriculture (such as crop rotation, etc.) was meeting difficulties on encountering the old communal order still governing the English village. As for instance the forceful system of crop rotation, the three field system and the grazing of cattle in the fields after the harvest gathering. Under these conditions it was more profitable for the landowner to separate or «enclose» his lands and then to dispose of them under his own supervision. By uniting the scattered parcels of lands into one place the landlord at the same time grasped all kinds of waste land, meadow and other conveniences which formerly the peasants utilized.

\* The «division» of the communal lands accomplished under the control of the landowners laid the greatest hardships upon the already oppressed peasants, even upon those who themselves owned land (freeholders). Having received during the division and enclosures an insignificant plot of land, the peasant having lost the right to use the common pasture land, was not able, under such conditions to carry on any kind of economy and was forced to abandon or to sell his plot of land to the landlord. But even more deplorable became the condition of the peasants, the «copy-holders»<sup>1</sup> who rented their land by right of inheritance. The landowner finding this «copy-hold» method unprofitable attempted to destroy it. Without much ceremony, the landlord drove the copy-holder from his «inherited» plot of land refusing him the right

<sup>1</sup> *Copy-hold* — a tenure of land by copy — that is by a special document given to the peasant by the master. Copy-hold was an inherited tenure based on the custom which established a definite payment by the peasant for the land to the landlord. Prior to the agrarian revolution the majority of the peasants in England were copy-holders.

to till this land at all, or else he rented it to him on new conditions based upon a short-term lease. But for the landowner at the present time a long-term lease was more profitable than a short-term one. This new method, so-called tenant farming, gave the landlord a high rent. This was accessible only to the rich farmer (kulak) or the capitalist. It is therefore not surprising that the peasants fought stubbornly against the enclosures. In the 16th and 17th centuries a number of agrarian revolts took place in England under the slogan of «down with enclosures». But the state came to the assistance of the landlord. Punitive expeditions were sent into the villages. The interests of the landlords were protected «by the law». In the beginning of the 18th century the English Parliament issued special decrees, legalizing and enforcing enclosures.

While during the first sixty years of the 18th century about 312,000 acres were enclosed, in 1760—1801 the total area of all the enclosed land exceeded 3,000,000 acres.

#### **The Consequences of the Enclosures.**

The enclosing of lands had very great social and economic consequences. As a result of it, in place of feudal property was created bourgeois landed property. That section of the landlords which became wealthy turned into large proprietors connected with merchants and banks. In place of the small peasant production with its primitive technique, there grew up a large scale farming economy, utilizing modern implements, crop rotation system, cattle raising, etc.

Only a section of the expropriated peasants remained in the village as agricultural workers on the farms. The largest section of the bankrupt peasants streamed into the cities ready to sell their labour power under any conditions. The agrarian revolution created the most important element without which large capitalist production could not get along: as a result of it a large mass of unemployed proletarians «free as birds» was thrown on the market.

The expropriation of the peasantry created still another condition necessary for the development of capitalist industry. The agrarian revolution brought with it the *extension of the internal market*. The peasants, deprived of their land and driven into the cities, were now compelled, in order to fully satisfy their requirements in food and clothing, to purchase food products, clothing and other articles of daily consumption. The expropriation of the peasantry also meant the disappearance of the auxiliary village industry, a complete separation of industry from agriculture. The farmers, who now took the place of the peasants, were buying not only products of consumption but also the means of productions (agricultural implements, tools, etc.).

#### **The Disintegration of Handicraft. The Manufacturing Stage of Capitalism in Industry.**

The expropriation of the small producers also took place in the sphere of industry. Beginning with the 16th century capitalist manufacture was beginning to develop in England. As the immediate predecessor of factory production, manufacture did not by any means fully destroy small production. To the contrary, city handicraft and agricultural home industry served for a long period of time as the basis for the development of manufacture. During the manufacturing period the positions of the small



artisan were varied, beginning with his more or less independent position in the market and ending with his complete transformation into a worker in the manufacturing enterprise, although he still continued to work at home. *Daniel Defoe*, the author of the well known «*Robinson Crusoe*», left a very interesting description of the conditions of the textile industry in the northern districts of England at the beginning of the 18th century. From this description it can be seen that at that time the small producer in various places still stepped forward independently on the market.

«We found the country one continued village, though every way mountainous, hardly a house standing out of a speaking distance from another; and as the day cleared up, we could see at every house a tenter, and on almost every tenter a piece of cloth, kersie, or shalloon; every clothier must necessarily keep one horse at least to fetch home his wool and his provisions from the market, to carry his yarn to the spinners, his manufacture to the fulling mill and when finished to the market to be sold»... (*Daniel Defoe*, *A Tour through Great Britain*, Vol. III, pp. 144—5. Edition 1769, The excerpt is from Defoe's description of the West Riding Cloth Industry in 1724).

In the cotton textile industry which began to develop in England in the beginning of the 17th century, the domestic handicraft industry also predominated and was characterized by a certain independence and the comparative well being of the small artisans.

However, already in the 17th century complaints of the weavers against the domination of the merchants could be heard in the woolen industry. With the extension of the market it became ever harder for the artisan to dispose of his products. A wealthy merchant who knew well the conditions of the market soon became the intermediary between the small producer and the market and soon began to dictate his terms to the artisan. Within a short time the artisan became dependent upon the merchant also for his raw material. The merchant-middleman was transformed into both the merchant-seller and merchant-buyer placing with the artisan the order and then buying from him all the products according to the prices set by the merchant. The handicraftsman, dependent upon the capitalist was being compelled to increase his working day, — he also compelled his entire family, including the youngest children, to work. The work was carried on throughout the entire day and even throughout the night. One of the future inventors of machines (Crompton), a son of a handicraftsman, thus recalls the days of his childhood: «I had hardly begun to walk when I was compelled to work in the cotton textile production. My mother would put the yarn into a deep tub into which water was poured and put me into the tub so that I would soften the yarn with my feet. Water was constantly added and when the tub was filled with water to a point when I was no longer able to stand, a chair was moved to the tub and I would continue to work, holding on to its back». (Re-translated from the Russian.)

And finally such a handicraftsman was transformed into an actual hired worker, working at home for the capitalist.

**Scattered and  
Concentrated  
Manufacture.**

The capitalist merchant in extending ever wider his influence over the handicraftsmen, compelled the entire village to work for him, introducing widely the technical sub-division of labour among the home workers. Every individual process of work on wool-combing, spinning, weaving, dyeing and the final finishing process was executed by separate workers and groups of workers. This facilitated the speeding-up of the process of work. The process of production was split-up into the simplest mechanical operations; a new type of worker with a very narrow speciality was developed, who was fully and entirely dependent upon his employer — the capitalist.

The centralized or concentrated form of manufacturing when a merchant-manufacturer united the workers in one place, in a large manufacture subordinating them to his full control was found much less frequently. Such manufacturing differed from the factory only in this that as yet it had no machine. *Adam Smith*, the greatest economist of the 18th century, described the pin industry of his times in the following manner, highly elated over its exceedingly complex division of labour: «one worker draws the wire, another straightens it out, the third cuts it, the fourth sharpens it, the fifth turns the top for the head of the pin. The finishing of the head in itself falls into two or three operations: setting it is a special operation; another is the finishing of the pin and even the packing of the pins into the paper is an entirely special and independent operation. In this way the labour of preparing a pin falls into approximately eighteen different operations.»

Frequently a number of centralized and scattered manufactures would combine with one another. A part of the work, the most complicated processes were carried out in the manufacture proper, while the remaining work was carried on as previously at the homes of the handicraftsmen. Only the factory finally completed the process of the destruction of this small scale production. But already in the manufacturing period the handicraftsman was bankrupt, deprived of his independence, thrown into full dependence upon capital and subjected to the most merciless exploitation.

**The Results of  
Primitive Accumulation. The  
Immediate Causes of the Technical Revolution.**

And thus, as a result of primitive accumulation in England, all the necessary conditions for the inception of large scale capitalist production were created. The plundering of the colonies resulted in the formation of gigantic capital in the hands of individual capitalists who sought practical application of their resources for the purpose of exploitation. The agrarian revolution created for capital a reserve army of entirely propertyless proletarians. The same kind of proletariat was also being created as a result of the expropriation of one time independent handicraftsmen by the merchant.

The separation of the producers from the means of production also gave a strong impetus to the development and extension of the internal market in England. Widely developed technical sub-division of labour in manufacture served as a preparatory stage for the beginning of machine production. Due to manufacture which simplified and

subdivided the processes of labour into very many parts, reducing them to simple and repeated operations, a wide possibility for the invention of mechanical instruments for work, i. e., of machines which performed these repeated operations was created. This feature of manufacture created the workers, who were able to make machines with precise and very complicated parts.

In this way the invention of the machine came as the inevitable result of all the proceeding changes in the English economics and technique which began with the 16th century. The need for machines began to be felt as an immediate social requirement in the 18th century. The growing market presented a large demand for products of industry which could not be satisfied under the old manufacturing means of production. During the entire course of the 18th century persistent attempts were made in England to find a new method of production. And finally these attempts were crowned with success. In the second half of the 18th century the technical revolution took place. Machines were invented, and the immediate consequence was the creation of the factory.

## § 2. The Industrial Revolution.

### The Technical Revolution in the Cotton Textile Industry.

The industrial revolution took place first of all in the cotton textile industry. This is explained by its peculiar position among other spheres of English industry at that time. Cotton textile production was a new industry. Here were no departments. This sphere of industry did not know government regulation. At the same time it was exposed to external competition represented by the Indian handicraft cotton textile industry which had been developing since time immemorial. Indian goods were brought into England on the ships of the East Indian Co. and were distinguished by their exceptionally high quality. Because of the ever growing demand for cotton textile goods which was driving out the linen and partially also the woolen goods, the manufacturers of cotton textile goods were more interested in technical improvement and in changing it to large mass capitalist production than those in other enterprises. In response to this requirement came a flood of inventions. The inventors were people of the most varied classes and professions. The majority of them were self educated people, workers and handicraftsmen who had to deal with more or less complicated instruments (automatic weaving looms, watches, watermills, etc.). At a much later period the special scientist undertook the work of invention.

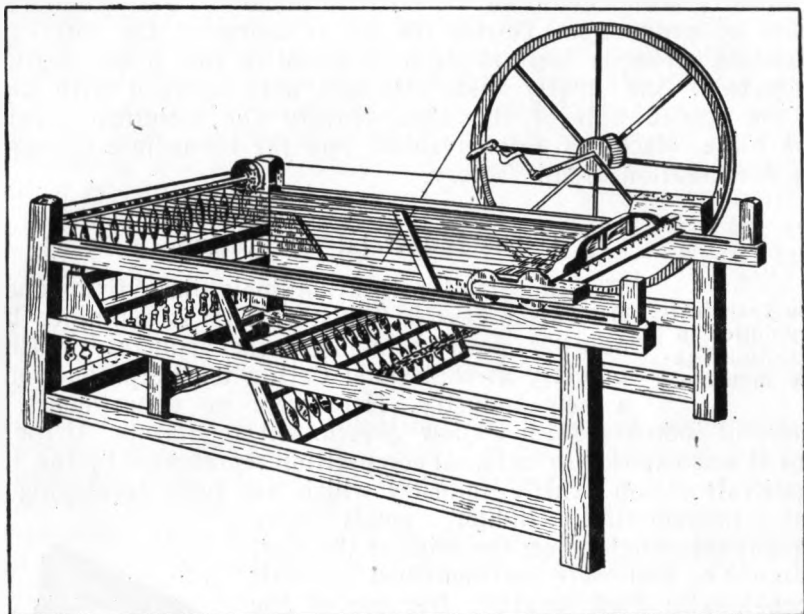


John Kay.

The first important improvement in the cotton textile industry took place in the weaving process. Mechanic *John Kay* invented the flying shuttle in 1733. In order to set the shuttle into motion it was



sufficient to jerk a handle with a cord, whereas previously the weaver had to throw over the shuttle alternately with the right or the left hand. The flying shuttle in this way accelerated the process of work and, in addition, gave the possibility for one weaver to weave goods of such width which previously could be done only by two weavers. The Key shuttle was soon widely distributed and weaving gained very much in speed. But due to this invention, which considerably speeded up the process of the weaving production, the spinners were no longer able to satisfy the growing demand for yarn. The wages of the spinners increased. The manufacturers complained indignantly of the



Mechanical spinning wheel called «Jenny».

«stubbornness» and «greediness» of the spinners who did not want to work for the former miserable pay. «The spinning hunger» stimulated the capitalists to seek the way for improvement also in the spinning process. In 1761 «the Society for the Encouragement of Art and Industry» issued a special appeal in which premiums were offered to the one who would invent a mechanical spinning machine. And in 1765 a weaver, *James Hargreaves*, actually invented a small mechanical spinner which was set into motion by hand and to which he gave the name of his daughter — «Jenny». The «Jenny» could work simultaneously with sixteen to eighteen spindles. This invention brought about sharp changes in the technical development of spinning. The new implement was already a real machine which replaced from sixteen to eighteen former handicraftsmen who worked on their automatic spinning wheels with only one spindle.

Marx wrote in his work «Capital»: «The machine which is the starting point of the industrial revolution, supercedes the workman

who handles a single tool by a mechanism operating with a number of similar tools, and set in motion by a single motive power, whatever the form of that power may be». The «Jenny» spread very rapidly. Not being clumsy and being comparatively cheap it penetrated into the huts of the handicraftsmen. Yarn became cheaper rapidly. Now to the contrary, the weavers found themselves in a more advantageous position since they were not able to use up the sharply increased quantity of yarn. The demand for weavers increased. Their wages increased. Many peasant weavers completely dropped their agricultural economy and gardens and transformed themselves completely into industrial workers.

The spinning «Jenny» produced a thin but not a firm thread. For this reason, the search for further improvement in the sphere of spinning did not cease with its invention.

Attempts at new inventions were made by the most varied classes and professions. The shrewd and shameless barber, watchman and self trained mechanic *Richard Arkwright* stole from one of the inventors a model of a big spinning machine. Having slightly improved the new machine he claimed it as his own invention (1769). This was the so-called *Water Machine* as it was set into motion by water. Arkwright himself had organized several textile mills, so-called in comparison with flour and water mills. The locomotive power used



Arkwright.

in this machine already was the force of nature and not of man. It already demanded the concentration of production into a large factory. A handicraftsman was not able to use such a machine. The next improved machine, that of the mechanic *Samuel Crompton* (1780) was also a large mechanism which could be used only in a capitalist factory. The «mule», as Crompton called it, united the quality of the «Jenny» and of the *Water Machine* giving a thin, but firm thread. The goods produced by the spinning mule exceeded the best fabrics of the most skilful Indian weavers.

The lagging behind of weaving in comparison with spinning which came as a result of the application of the new spinning machine created an urgent need for the invention of machines in the sphere of weaving. «The weaving hunger» was appeased by the invention of the *mechanical power loom* by *Edmund Cartwright* (1785), a clergyman by profession, who formerly had been a self educated mechanic. A worker could in a given period of time produce as much on the Cartwright mechanical loom as was previously done by forty hand weavers.

In 1819 the weaving machine of Cartwright was further improved by *Radcliff Horace* after which it was generally applied and rapidly began to drive the hand weavers out of the home industry. Of the secondary inventions of great significance of that time was the invention of *Bell* in 1783. Bell invented the method of printing designs

on woven goods by means of a cylinder. His cylindrical printing machine replaced one hundred workers.

The invention of the machine changed the organization of industry. The basic form of industry which was rapidly driving out all the previously existing forms — handicraft, scattered and concentrated manufacture — became a factory — a large capitalist enterprise with machine technique. Already in 1790 England had about 150 cotton textile factories. These were large factories with brick buildings, four or five stories high. Each one of them had from 150 to 600 people. Built mainly near the rivers (on account of the need for water power) the first factories were located thickly along the river shores in the northwestern part of England.

The growth of the cotton textile production immediately assumed colossal extent. While in the beginning of the 18th century England imported not more than 1,000,000 lbs. of cotton, and this figure has trebled during the first 50 years of the 18th century, then, with the invention of the spinning and weaving machine the import of cotton has increased many times tenfold. In 1764 England imported 3,870,000 lbs. of cotton while in 1789 this increased to 32,476,000 lbs. of cotton.

The same stormy growth continued also in the subsequent years of the last decade of the 18th century as well as in the first half of the 19th century. In 1799 England imported 48,000,000 lbs. while in 1821, 137,000,000, and in 1841, 437,000,000 lbs.

The spinning process had been wholly mechanized in the cotton textile industry at the close of the 18th century. The hand weavers held out much longer. But they were also squeezed out by the factory in the first half of the 19th century. The following table clearly illustrates the process of destruction of the handweaving production.

Years	1819—1821	1829—1831	1844—1846	1859—1861
The number of weavers in the cotton textile industry . . . . .	10,000	50,000	150,000	208,000
The number of hand weavers . . . . .	240,000	225,000	60,000	7,300

From the cotton textile industry machines were also introduced into other spheres of the English textile industry — wool, knitting and silk. «A radical change in the mode of production in one sphere of industry involves a similar change in other spheres,» wrote Marx. Later on, although more slowly than in the cotton textile industry, the industrial revolution also took place in other spheres. Here also the factory drove out the remaining semi-dependent artisans and home workers working for the merchants.

The first large machines were moved mostly by water power. For this reason most of the factories were generally built along the rivers. But this was very inconvenient for the enterprises. The owners of the lands located near the rivers were sharply raising the rent on these

**Invention of  
the Steam  
Engine.**



lands. It was also frequently necessary to build the factories in places removed from the market and big roads. In this way the development of the factory industry had to be limited by the boundaries of the river basins. All this compelled the search for an engine of a different type which would be suitable for any locality. Such an engine was discovered in the form of the *steam engine*.

Steam engines were known in England prior to that time. Already at the end of the 17th century steam pumps were used in the mining industry. But only in 1765 the mechanic *James Watt* (1736 — 1819) made the first model of a perfected steam engine which could be utilized as a steam engine for any kind of working mechanism. In actual practice the steam engine was applied by Watt at a much later period. The first textile factory using a steam engine was built only in 1784. Prior to this Watt was successful in installing a few machines in metallurgical plants. Towards the close of the 18th century the steam engine was already driving out the water engines everywhere. In 1800, 321 steam engines were already in operation, of which 84 were working in the cotton textile industry.



James Watt.

**The Revolution  
in the Metallur-  
gical Industry.**

At the end of the 18th century great changes also took place in the metallurgical industry of England.

The appearance of machines brought forth a new sphere of industry—machine construction—which required a large quantity of metal as the raw material. Thus, without the corresponding development of metallurgy, the full victory of machine technique could not take place in England.

However, the English metallurgical industry was still backward in the 18th century, even in comparison with other countries. In the beginning and even in the middle of the 19th century England did not have enough of its own iron. It had to import iron from Sweden, Russia and even from Spain and the North American colony. The main difficulty was due to fuel. The smelting of metal was previously carried on exclusively with charcoal. But England had very few forests. Already in the 16th century a law was passed prohibiting the building of cast iron and steel mills along the river Thames and near London as the destruction of forests threatened the development of ship building. The richest iron ore deposits of England remained unused. The country had equally rich deposits of coal. But for a long period of time the smelting of ore with coal produced unclean brittle cast iron which could not be forged with a hammer.

It became the task of the inventors to discover a method of smelting good metal with coal. At the end of the century this problem was fully solved. In 1735 the owner of a cast iron plant, *Abraham Derby*, discovered a method of utilizing coal for cast iron smelting by adding quick lime to the ore. The application of this method produced good cast

iron. Now it was necessary to solve the task of obtaining iron and steel from cast iron. These difficulties were also eliminated in 1784 by *Henry Cort* and in 1790 by *Benjamin Huntsman*, who found the method of producing a high temperature under which it was possible to transform cast iron into iron and steel. The production of metal with a mineral fuel could now be applied on mass scale.

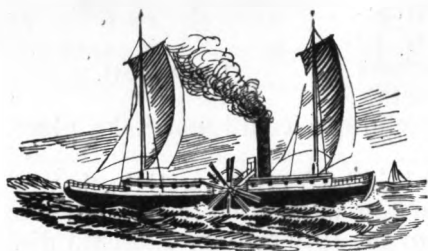
The invention of the steam engine also provided the locomotive power for the metallurgical industry. In the eighties a mechanical hammer weighing 120 lbs. and making 150 strokes a minute was constructed by Watt. In the nineties of the 18th century almost all of the important operations were already mechanized by the application of many different machines. The process of production was increased tenfold. Production of the metallurgical plants grew correspondingly driving out, the same as in the textile factories, the handicraft production of metal. The growth of metallurgy and the output of coal can be seen from the following data: in 1720 England produced 18,000 tons of cast iron, in 1802 250,000. The output of coal in 1750 was about 5 million tons and at the end of the 18th century it exceeded 10 million tons.

Blast furnaces replaced the old small smelters. Each one of these furnaces produced much more metal per year than the former furnaces.

**The Revolution in Transport.** The extension of production and of markets created the necessity for new means of communication. The former ground roads of England, over which only

the beasts of burden and pedestrians could pass, were now absolutely unsuitable. It was much more convenient to utilize the rivers, but

the network of rivers was also found insufficient. In the course of the 18th and in the beginning of the 19th centuries canals were built extensively throughout England.



Fulton's first steamboat.

In 1825 the net of artificial canals reached 500 miles while in 1840 it increased to 1,500 miles. Simultaneously the roads were also improved. Only during the period of 1769—1774 there were 452 laws enacted relative to the construction and repair of the old high ways.

During the twelve years 1818—1829 1,900 miles of new highways were built.

Postal service began to function regularly in England during the last quarter of the 18th century. Finally during the first decades of the 19th century the construction of railways was started, first pulled by the horses and later by steam engine. In 1814, *George Stephenson*, who was originally a worker and later became the director of a machine construction plant, invented a locomotive. Later, in 1825, this locomotive was further perfected by him. In 1829, the first railway was built, 50 kilometres in length, connecting Liverpool and Manchester.

By the thirties and forties of the 19th century England was covered with a network of railways. Approximately at the same time the British fleet replaced sails by the steam-engine. The first steamship was invented by an American, *Fulton*, in 1807 and soon this

invention was adopted in England. In 1836 there were about 500 steamships in England.

**The Growth of Cities.** The development of large machine industry changed the economic geography of England. While prior to the industrial revolution the south-eastern shires<sup>1</sup> were the most thickly populated and the most commercially and industrially developed, after the revolution the great part of the south-eastern population of England rushed to the north-west. Here in the districts of the new factory industry, near the deposits of coal and iron, were created new industrial centres, and new cities rapidly grew up.

The rapid growth of the population of the new industrial cities can be seen from the following example. The city of Birmingham, the centre of metallurgical industry, in 1740 had a population of 25,000 people, in 1800 the population grew to 73,000. The city of Manchester, a centre of the English textile industry was a big village in the beginning of the 18th century, while in 1800 it already had a population of 95,000.

### § 3. The Revolution in the Social Economic Structure of Society.

The introduction of factory production brought about at the same time a radical change in the social structure, new social classes were formed. Society was sharply divided into two opposing classes: the large bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

The petty - bourgeoisie found itself between these two classes. The majority of the independent and semi-independent artisans were going bankrupt and found themselves in the ranks of the proletariat; only a few «lucky ones» rose on the shoulders of the bankrupt artisans to the position of large manufacturers.

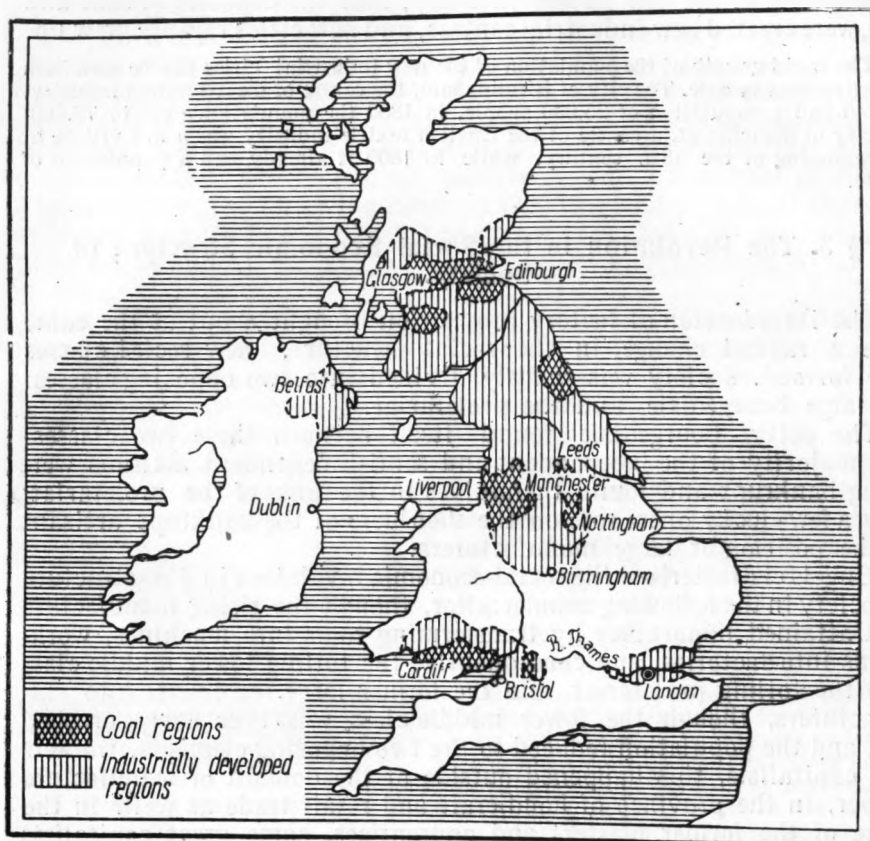
Engels characterized the social-economic revolution in the structure of society in the following manner: «For, though the rising manufacture first attained importance by transforming tools into machines, work-rooms into factories, and consequently, the toiling lower middle class into the toiling proletariat, and the former large merchants into manufacturers, though the lower middle class was thus early crushed out, and the population reduced to the two opposing elements, workers and capitalists, this happened outside of the domain of manufacture proper, in the province of handicraft and retail trade as well. In the place of the former masters and apprentices, came great capitalists and workmen who had no prospect of rising above their class. Handwork was carried on after the fashion of factory work, the division of labour was strictly applied, and small employers who could not compete with large establishments were forced down into the proletariat». (*Engels, Conditions of the working class in England.*)

The industrial revolution prepared, as was stated before, by the agrarian revolution, now in its turn influenced agricultural economy. The great demand for the products of agricultural economy, presented by the growing industrial cities, accelerated the reconstruction of the agricultural farms into capitalist enterprises, producing foodstuff and raw material for industry. In the beginning of the 18th cen-

<sup>1</sup> *Shire* — a territorial division of Great Britain; a county.



tury an intensive concentration of farms began to take place in England. The capitalist farmer renting from the landlord hundreds of hectares, employing permanent and seasonal agricultural workers, played the same rôle in the village as the manufacturer in the city, i. e., the entrepreneur-capitalist. The disappearance of the auxiliary home industry, destroyed by competition of factory, left the few remaining peasants, who had managed to survive in some way, in a position



New Industrial regions in England after the industrial revolution.

where they could not make their income meet their expenses. They had only two ways left: either to go to the factory and become factory workers or to hire themselves out as agricultural workers on the farm. In this way in the village also now appeared at the one pole the entrepreneur-capitalist and at the other pole—an agricultural proletarian, a hired labourer, exploited by the same capitalist.

#### The Industrial Bourgeoisie.

The social power and the significance of the industrial bourgeoisie grew alongside with the growth of factory development. The old nobility and the old commercial and financial bourgeoisie who in the beginning viewed with contempt the new «upstart», soon began to feel the

influence of this new social power. New industrialists, manufacturers have already become millionaires, commanding whole armies of workers. Towards the end of his life Arkwright was the owner of ten factories. In 1802, in the factories of another large manufacturer, Peale, were employed 15,000 workers, the entire city of Berne. A third manufacturer, Samuel Odnow, at this time was receiving about £ 17,000 clear profit annually. In a word, «where large-scale industry replaced manufacture, the bourgeoisie has tremendously increased its riches, its influence, and has become the leading class in the country» (*Engels*). While prior to the revolution commercial capital, the merchant, subordinated production to himself and dictated his conditions to the producer, the contrary was the case now, industrial capital transformed trade, according to the expression of Marx, into «the servant of industrial production», into its agent.

«The bourgeoisie subjected the village to the rule of the towns». («The Communist Manifesto»).

It entered into a struggle with the large landlords who were the dominant class in England.

The contradictions between the new industrial bourgeoisie and the old ruling classes has made itself felt particularly strongly in the commercial policy. The English landlords were interested in high prices on agricultural products. The higher the price of bread and other foodstuffs, the steeper grew the rent which the farmers paid to the landlords. The landed aristocracy passed laws limiting the free import of corn, grain, of food products and of agricultural raw material as this increased their profit. They demanded completely free trade without tariffs. The high technique of English industry in comparison with other countries permitted them not to fear the import of any manufactured products from the outside.

The demand for free trade became a slogan of the industrial bourgeoisie in its struggle against the aristocracy.

**Adam Smith —  
the Ideologist  
of the Industrial  
Bourgeoisie.**

Adam Smith (1723—1790) was the outstanding ideologist of the new bourgeoisie. He is considered the «father» of bourgeois political economy. In 1776 he published a large book «The Wealth of Nations» in which the bourgeois economic period received its full and systematic exposition. Adam Smith asserted that the wealth of nations consists in the mass of commodities created by large industry. But what is necessary in order to increase this mass of commodities? The division of labour and free competition. Under the question of free competition Smith indicated for the bourgeoisie a program of struggle for several decades. According to his opinion the freedom of competition is the highest good, the true and unchangeable law of nature. As a result of free competition harmony is reached between the personal welfare of each individual person and the welfare of the entire society as a whole. Only free competition, according to Smith, can secure cheap prices and high quality of products. For this reason everything must be abolished which interferes with free trade — protective tariffs, monopolistic companies, guilds, etc. Adam Smith was opposed to every interference of the State power into affairs of industry and commerce. «The Government official who will take upon himself the work of telling the private people how they must use their capital, — wrote Smith, — would be engaged in an entirely useless business. Neither must the State interfere in relations between the capitalist and the workers. There must be a full «freedom of labour». As a true bourgeois, Smith was against any and all labour organizations, against trade unions and even against mutual aid societies.

**The Conditions  
of the Proleta-  
riat.**

Never before was the economic condition of the worker so unstable, so dependent upon the capitalists as in the period of machine production. The machine in itself represents a great value inasmuch as it saves and facilitates the work of men. But under capitalist conditions it becomes the means for increased exploitation and the worsening of the conditions of the working class. As a result of the industrial revolution the workers found themselves reduced to the lowest step of the social ladder, plunged into poverty and into capitalist slavery.

The end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century were particularly hard periods for the English worker.

Due to the machines, the productivity of labour of the individual workers increased tenfold and even hundredfold. But wages fell instead of rising. While in the nineties of the 18th century the weaver earned up to 4 pounds a week, in the beginning of the 19th century, after the invention of the weaving loom by Cartwright, their earnings fell to 13 shillings<sup>1</sup> and in 1806 to 10 shillings while in 1816 they dropped as low as 5 shillings a week. And this was just at the time when prices on all the products of prime necessities rose in England. All prices on food products rose in England on the average of 134% from 1760 to 1812. But the price on bread at the beginning of the 19th century, due to the fact that England at that time was engaged in a war with France, increased by 8—10 times in comparison with the prices of the seventies and eighties of the 19th century. Such high cost of living doomed the worker and his family to direct starvation.

The competition of the factories bankrupted hundreds of thousands of artisans and transformed them into paupers. The manufacturer, having at his disposal a vast reserve army of unemployed, was able to carry the exploitation of his workers to the most extreme limits and thus condemn the working class to pauperisation. Unbelievably long working day, incredibly low wages, merciless exploitation of women and child labour, cultural degeneration and death — that is what the capitalist factory brought to the workers.

**The Exploita-  
tion of Women  
and Child La-  
bour.**

The operation of the machine did not require much physical force. This permitted the capitalist to resort widely to the exploitation of women and child labour. It is true that women and child labour was already widely employed even in the manufacturing period. The worker handicraftsmen with their entire families, including the younger children, worked for the merchants. In the large manufacturing enterprises with their minute division of labour which facilitated the utilization of separate processes, both women and child labour was also widely applied. But only during the factory period did the exploitation of women and child labour acquire a mass character, at the same time assuming the most brutal and inhuman forms. In a race for higher profit the manufacturers discharged men workers and replaced them with the cheaper labour of women, youth and even

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<sup>1</sup> *Shilling* — one twentieth of a pound, about 41 copeks; pence — one twelfth of a shilling.

with that of small children. The difference in the pay of the adult labourer and of the children was very great. In 1806, for instance, men-weavers received 24 shillings a week, women-weavers — 14 shillings, while the children received 4 shillings 6 pence a week. In this way the women received two times less than men and the children three to four times less than the women workers.

The following figures illustrate the degree of utilization of the women and child labour: in 1815 the women constituted 56% of all the workers in the cotton-textile industry, in the linen industry — more than 70%. In 1834 in 380 textile factories in Scotland out of 46,825 workers there were 13,720 youth (from 13 to 18 years) and 7,400 children below 13 years of age.

The conditions of the children working in the factory were horrible. The children began to work at the age of 5 and sometimes even at the age of 3 performing some sort of simple operation — combing wool or yarn, wiping the soot from the boilers, chimneys, etc. Their working day was of as long a duration as that of the adults, i. e., 14 to 15, at times even 18 hours a day. Very many children were virtually in the position of slaves. The entrepreneurs took them from the parish orphan asylums or bought them for a number of years from parents who were plunged into complete poverty. Some of the shrewd speculators even gathered whole parties consisting of hundreds of children, shipping them into the northern factory districts. Deprived of fresh air, poorly nourished and fatigued to a condition of the full loss of strength, children were virtually dying out in the factories or were made cripples for the rest of their lives. The supervisors tortured these «small slaves» of capital in every possible way. Beating with fists, boots and whips were very common everyday occurrences. During the night the children were locked into the sleeping rooms for fear that they would run away. Frequently passing through the factory buildings after work hours the supervisor would stumble over dead children who had died from exhaustion at the machine.

In 1802 the Government passed a law limiting the working day of children to 12 hours. The law of 1814 prohibited child labour below 9 years of age, but before the introduction of factory inspection (in 1883) this law, according to the admission of the manufacturers themselves, remained a dead letter.

**The living Conditions of the Workers in England at the End of the 18th and the Beginning of 19th Century.**

The horrible exploitation in the factory was accompanied by similar home conditions of the English workers. The overcrowding of the new industrial centres created a sharp housing crisis, the entire burden of which lay upon the workers. The good apartments were expensive and the workers frequently had to languish in partially ruined old houses or in buildings built for animals (stables, cow-sheds, etc.). New houses

built by the real-estate speculators, especially for the purpose of renting them to the workers, were without even the most simple conveniences. The workers lived in them in a very crowded condition, in dirt and dampness. Engels thus described the homes of the English workers: «It is nothing unusual to find a man, his wife, four or five children, and, sometimes both grandparents, all in one single room about ten to twelve feet square, where they eat, sleep and

work. The interior arrangement of the dwellings is poverty stricken in various degrees, down to the utter absence of even the most necessary furniture, dirty rags take the place of beds.» «These dwellings, — wrote one of the government officials about the workers' homes in Glasgow, — are usually so dirty and damp, so dilapidated that they are not even fit for stables.»

Poor nourishment, unsanitary conditions in the factory and of the workers' dwellings, the hard conditions of labour were responsible also for many epidemics. So-called «factory fever» which spread so widely in the factory districts, swept into the grave up to 16% of the sick. Typhus also raged among the workers. Very many workers were sick with tuberculosis. «Almost all the workers, — wrote Engels, — are weak, poorly built, thin, pale, their muscles flabby with the exception of those which have to be strained in work.» Child mortality in workers' families reached astounding figures. 75% of all the workers' children died before reaching the age of 5.

**The Revolution-  
izing Influence  
of the Factory  
upon the Lives  
of the Wor-  
kers.**

The industrial revolution, having given birth to the working class, plunged it into the greatest misery and poverty. But the capitalist factory not only exploited the workers but also consolidated them, united and organized them for the struggle against the exploiters. The capitalist yoke of exploitation revolutionized the consciousness of the proletariat, arousing in him the feeling of protest against the inhuman conditions into which he was plunged by the capitalists. Engels wrote as follows about the revolutionizing influence of the industrial revolution on the consciousness of the workers: «At the same time the destruction of the former organization of hand-work, and the disappearance of the lower middle class deprived the workingman of all possibility of rising into the middle class himself. Hitherto he had always had the prospect of establishing himself somewhere as master artificer, perhaps employing journeymen and apprentices; but now, when master artificers were crowded out by manufacturers, when large capital has become necessary for carrying on work independently, the working class became, for the first time, an integral, permanent class of the population, whereas it had formerly often been merely a transition leading to the bourgeoisie. Now, he who was born to toil had no other prospect than that of remaining a toiler all his life. Now, for the first time, therefore, the proletariat was in a position to undertake an independent movement.»

In the «Communist Manifesto» Marx and Engels explain to the workers of all countries that capitalism itself creates, in the workers that force which must destroy it. «The advance of industry, they wrote, — whose involuntary promoter is the bourgeoisie, replaces the isolation of the labourers due to competition by their revolutionary combination, due to association. The development of modern industry, therefore, cuts from under its feet the very foundation on which the bourgeoisie produces and appropriates products. What the bourgeoisie therefore produces, above all, are its own grave-diggers. The fall of the bourgeois and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable» («Communist Manifesto»).



**The Beginning  
of the Labour  
Movement. The  
Machine Brea-  
kers.**

The labour movement begins with the inception of large capitalist production. The introduction of machines, bankrupting of the artisans and the workers of home industry, the lowering of the earning of qualified workers called forth a whole series of protests and revolts among the workers. In the second half of the 18th and at the beginning of the 19th century in England attempts on the part of the workers — former artisans and the workers of home industry — were frequently observed to destroy machines and burn down factories. In 1769 the Government issued a special law threatening with capital punishment all those who would destroy machines or buildings in which the latter were located. In spite of this, spontaneous revolts against the machines continued. In 1779 the movement against the machine had assumed such a wide extent in Lancashire that the Government was forced to call out troops for the suppression of the «rebels». In 1796 revolts took place in Northernshire and Yorkshire. In the beginning of the 19th century the machine breakers came out under the name of Luddites <sup>1</sup>. The Luddite movement was a movement of impoverished workers — artisans of the hosiery and knitting industry. The movement embraced several shires (Nottingham, Leistershire and Derbyshire). The workers created a secret union and set themselves the aim of a systematic destruction of machines in England. The movement was suppressed by troops and some of the arrested leaders of this movement were hung.

Alongside the spontaneous revolts against the machine the workers also attempted by peaceful and legal means to secure the prohibition of their application. Dozens of petitions with which the workers and artisans of various industries appealed to Parliament are still preserved. In the seventies of the 18th century, for instance, such a petition was submitted by the workers of the cotton-textile industry. In 1794 the combers presented a petition asking the prohibition of the introduction of the Cartwright combing machines. In 1808 to 1809 the weavers of the cotton-textile mills presented a petition in which they complained that they had been impoverished through the application of the mechanical weaving loom. «The mechanical weaving loom», — the petition stated, — has completely killed us, and if Parliament will not ensure us the prohibition to pay below a certain minimum then we shall all become a burden on the parish.» (Re-translated from the Russian.) However, parliament, of course, did not pay any attention to all of these complaints and pleadings of the workers.

**The Turn to-  
ward a higher  
Form of Strug-  
gle. The Strike  
Movement.**

The destruction of machines and the presentation of petitions against their application characterizes the initial stage of the labour movement. The major part of the struggle was carried on mainly by the workers of the home industry, working for the manufacturer and interested in the preservation of their handicraft. The ideal of this worker was in the past. They dreamt of the preservation of the old forms of production and were opponents of technical progress. The

<sup>1</sup> The name «Luddites» is explained as originating from the name of a certain General Lud to whom the rebels referred as to their leader. In reality, of course, no such a «General Lud» has ever existed.

struggle of the factory proletariat against the capitalists had already a different character. The workers understood that the cause does not lie in the machines but in their capitalist application, that the struggle must be carried on not against the machines but against those who have transferred the machines into a weapon of capitalist exploitation, i. e., against the capitalists. They utilized as a means of struggle the *strikes and the creation of trade unions*. The strike movement of the workers grew steadily. The strikes at the end of the nineties of the 18th century appeared so dangerous for the bourgeoisie that through its pressure a law was passed in 1799 against workers coalition (unions). This law viewed every collective action of the workers as a «rebellion» or «conspiracy» against the bosses. Any sort of workers' union was prohibited and the strike was declared a criminal offence. Basing themselves upon this law the English judges during the course of 25 years savagely suppressed every manifestation of the independent class movement of the proletariat.

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## CHAPTER II.

### THE GREAT FRENCH REVOLUTION.

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In its economic development France of the 18th century was the most advanced country on the continent of Europe. It surrendered its supremacy only to England where the social grounds for capitalist development had already been cleared by the bourgeois revolution of the 17th century. The feudal order still predominated in France at the end of the 18th century, in spite of the fact that capitalist relations had already begun to develop. The causes for the French bourgeoisie lagging behind (in comparison with the English) in clearing the social ground for capitalism were pointed out by Marx. He pointed out that «nothing had so much retarded the victorious march of the French bourgeoisie as the fact that it decided to act jointly with the peasantry only in 1789».

The feudal relations in France were broken by the great bourgeois revolution of the 18th century which swept aside feudalism and cleared the road for the development of bourgeois society. With this «liquidation of feudalism for the establishment of capitalism» (*Stalin*) the decisive rôle was played by *the revolutionary dictatorship of the lower sections of the population*, mainly by the city and the village poor. In a short period of time it carried out a work which «the bourgeoisie with its anxious watchfulness would not be able to cope with in the course of decades» (*Marx*). In the activity and the experience of the first dictatorship in history of the lower sections of the population lies the great historical significance of the Great French Revolution.

#### § 4. The Social Economic Order of pre-revolutionary France.

At the end of the 18th century France was predominantly an agricultural country. Of a population of 25 million, nine tenths of it lived in the village. Large cities were few in numbers, only Paris and Lyons having a population of over 100,000 persons.

**Foreign Trade.** The cities situated near the sea ports and connected with the foreign trade of France grew more rapidly than others. The turnover of this trade was rapidly increasing. From 1715 to 1789 it grew by about 5 times and on the eve of the Revolution reached 750 million livres a year<sup>1</sup>. The French

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<sup>1</sup> *Livre* — a French coin equal in value to 1 franc, i. e. 37½ copeks in gold. A livre equals 20 sous.

bourgeoisie maintained lively commercial relations not only with the European countries but also with the entire eastern coast of the Mediterranean, with India, with the West Indian Islands, and with the United States. The French merchants brought from their colonies and also from the Levantine countries (Turkey, Egypt) sugar cane, coffee, cocoa, dyes for material, cotton, leather and other raw materials. The French merchants also reaped great profits from the sales of Negroes, whom they seized in Africa and sold into slavery to the plantation owners in the United States.

The main articles for export from France were grape wines and articles of luxury in the production of which many of the French artisans, handicraftsmen and workers of large manufacturing enterprises toiled. The plundering of the colonial countries and the wide development of trade with the countries beyond the seas served for the French bourgeoisie, just as for the English, as the main source of primitive accumulation.

In the commercial cities — Marseilles, Bordeaux, Havre, Nantes — there grew up a powerful commercial industrial bourgeoisie. On the eve of the Revolution from Marseilles alone up to 1,500 ships every year were sent out to various countries.

The commercial turnover of Marseilles reached 300 million livres a year. Over 80,000 workers were occupied in the Marseilles port. The main profits from the over-sea trade were concentrated in the hands of the large trading companies. These companies received from the king the right of monopoly on trade with various trans-oceanic countries where they shamelessly plundered the native population. Particularly well-known was the East Indian trading company which concentrated in its hands the entire trade with India.

The plundering of the colonial population, the commerce in commodities and people (Negroes) facilitated the accumulation of gigantic financial resources in the hands of the French bourgeoisie. These financial resources sought for themselves further application in the trade, industry and agricultural economy of France. But in all of these spheres of national economy the development of capitalist relations encountered at every step the feudal order which served as an obstacle in its path.

#### **Feudal Order in the French Village.**

The French village of the 18th century differed sharply from the English village of that time. While in England at the end of the 18th century the large economy of the landlord or of the tenant farmer had, to a considerable extent, already driven out the small peasant, in France, on the other hand, the small peasant and small peasant economy predominated and the agricultural commune was still preserved. This, of course, does not mean that France did not have the landowners at that time. It did. The large landowners were generally the nobility-landlords, whose estates embraced from 2 to 5,000 hectares, while the majority of the peasant plots did not exceed a few hectares. In addition to this nobility, the catholic church was also a large owner of land in France, possessing up to one-third of the entire land under cultivation.

The overwhelming majority of the agricultural population in France consisted of peasants holding small plots of land and cultivating it with primitive agricultural implements. The number of such small peasant households reached about four million. The French

peasant, however, was not a full master of his plot of land. The land was owned by the seigneur, landlord or the church from whom the ancestors of the given peasant, so it was claimed, had received this land for tilling, and for which they had to pay quit-rent and taxes and perform all kinds of labour duties. The land would pass from one generation to another, from father to son, together with all the obligations that went with it. Before the revolution the peasantry as a whole was free; the landlord had no right to command the peasant and his family, the peasant could go whenever and wherever he wished from his plot of land. However, as long as he remained on the land he was obliged to fulfil his labour duties for the seigneur landlord or for the church.

These *feudal duties* which were levied on the peasant land entangled the French peasant in a heavy net of all sorts of restrictions and limitations; taking from him the greater part of his income and depriving him of his economic independence.

From every plot of land the peasant was compelled to pay yearly to the seigneur landlord either a certain amount of money (*cens*, *chinsh*) or a share of the crop (*champart*) which at times reached about one quarter of the entire harvest. In purchasing the land or in transferring it to his heirs the peasant was also compelled to pay duties to the landlord. The seigneur landlord would also collect special duties paid by the peasants for transporting grain or wine to the market over the roads and bridges. Frequently the peasant was prohibited from harvesting his own grapes until the harvesting of the landlords grapes was completed; he was also prohibited from selling wine until a month after the entire harvest was gathered. By this means the landlord was provided first of all with cheap labour hands during the busiest time of the harvest and later the sale of wine at high prices, while the peasants would have to sell their wine later on at a low price.

Trading in grain was also surrounded with all sorts of limitations and restrictions. The peasants were obliged to thrash the grain in the landlords mill; they were also compelled to bake their bread in the master's ovens or to pay a certain amount of money in order to free themselves from all these restrictive duties.

On all matters pertaining to the feudal duties the peasant could appeal to court only through the local seigneur-landlord, who either passed the judgment himself or appointed any other judge he wished. It is not surprising, therefore, that all the litigations of the peasants with the landlords were usually decided in favour of the landlords.

In addition to that the seigneur had the exclusive right of hunting. The peasants were prohibited from having in their possession hunting rifles even for the purpose of defending themselves from the wolves, while the landlords could, with impunity,



The peasant's position in the old order.



trample down the peasants' fields with horses and dogs, during the hunting season. Pigeons and rabbits which were bred by the landlords in large numbers also spoiled and destroyed the peasants' crops while the peasants under penalty of severe punishment could not even drive them from their fields.

The peasant was also oppressed by petty obligations which were humiliating to him personally. For instance, in meeting the landlord, the peasant had to bow low to him and frequently kiss his hand or his shoulder.

In general the feudal duties which were imposed on the peasants' lands chained the peasant hand and foot.

### **The Yoke of Taxation.**

The burden of feudal duties weighing upon the peasants was further increased by the additional obligation levied on him by the church. The peasant had to pay yearly to the French church a special tax which was called «tithe» because it took away one tenth and, in reality, frequently even the greater part of the peasant's income.

The peasants also carried the main burden of the state taxes both direct and indirect.

In addition to the general tax on real estate or on the entire total income (the so-called «tallage») the peasants also had to pay the per capita tax and «one twentieth», i. e. 1/20th part of the income. Of the indirect taxes, a particularly heavy burden on the peasants was the tax on salt. The sale of salt was monopolized by the state and the price on salt was very high, at the same time every peasant was obliged to purchase yearly a definite quantity of salt which greatly exceeded his actual requirements. The wine which was produced by the peasants was also taxed.

Heavy duties, as the duty to repair and maintain the highways, also constituted an additional hard burden upon the peasants.

### **The Crisis of Agricultural Economy.**

All of these extortions, taxes and duties took away from the peasant about two thirds of his net income. Under such conditions the French peasant could hardly make both ends meet, and frequently he dragged through a life of semistarvation.

If we recall that three fourths of the entire cultivated land in France was occupied by just such miserable peasant households then it will be clear that its degradation meant also the degradation of the entire agricultural economy, which in France was the main occupation of the population. The agricultural economy in France underwent a hard and prolonged crisis.

The large landlords (nobility, church, bourgeois) as a rule did not manage their own economy but rented their land to the peasants. The French peasants, who suffered from shortage of land, were willing to rent the land under the most disadvantageous conditions if only to raise a little foodstuffs. The «hunger» rental predominated. Generally the landlord arranged to receive half of the harvest for himself (share-cropping). Under such a state of affairs the landlord did not consider it necessary to maintain his own economy. The development of the rental of land on a large scale calculated for securing profits was also hindered. The «hunger» rental prices which were run up by the peasants themselves were consuming in advance the entire possible income. All of this interfered greatly with the development of the large capitalist enterprises in the agricultural economy of France. For this reason France even with the districts *having large land holdings*, remained predominantly a *country of small peasant economy*.

**The Penetration of Capitalist Relations into the Village. The Differentiation of the Peasantry.**

However the development of commodity and capitalist relations in France was penetrating also into the village, bringing with it new difficulties for the French peasant.

With the penetration of the commodity-money and capitalist relations into the village, land became a commodity subject to purchase and sale. The seigneurs were striving to separate their estates from the general mass of peasant land, scattered in various parts, they attempted to surround their estates at the expense of the peasant plots and to seize the common lands, forests and pastures. Being in need of money, in order to be able to transfer their economy to the lines of capitalist production, the seigneur-landlords searched in the archives of their castles for the old records about long forgotten feudal duties and would again impose them on the peasant, proposing that they should pay off these obligations with money.

The development of capitalist relations in the village brought about *differentiation among the peasantry*. From the general mass of the peasantry, an upper capitalist class developed who rented out their land to hired help and who traded in cattle, bread, wine, and other agricultural products. The property of these village «kulaks» or well-to-do farmers at times reached tens of hectares of land. On the other hand, there developed a class, called the «village poor», peasants owning small plots of land or no land at all, who were compelled to earn their livelihood by hiring out as agricultural workers either to the landlord or to their own village kulaks. The number of peasants with little or no landed property varied from one district to another but on the whole was very considerable. Thus in central France the percentage of the landless peasants reached 17 per cent and in some of the districts was as high as 80%.

Between this village poor and the village rich there still remained quite a solid layer of the middle peasantry. In central France the average of their plots of lands reached 10 hectares.

Between these varied layers of the French peasantry a severe struggle on a number of questions was being carried on. Particularly sharp encounters were provoked by the question of leaving the agricultural commune and the division of the common land.

The well-to-do peasants (kulaks), desiring to introduce a better method of economy, insisted on leaving the commune and demanded the division of the common land. They were supported in this by the landless poor peasants who hoped to receive at least a small plot of land for their own personal use during the division out of that common fund from which they received no benefit. However, the village poor insisted upon a division of the common land *equally* between all the inhabitants of the village, while the upper strata of the well-to-do peasants proposed to divide the common lands in accordance with the quantity of the stock and land, etc., which the peasants had in their possession. The middle peasantry was opposed to the division of land. The increased allotment of land they might gain, would not compensate them for the loss of the common privileges, especially that of pasture land.

However, in spite of the struggle between the varied stratas of the French peasantry they came out in a united front against the old order, because the feudal regime and privileges of their master landlords, the yoke of taxation and the shortage of land affected not only the

poor and middle peasantry but also the well-to-do peasants. On the eve of the downfall of the old order the «peasant question» stood exactly in the following manner: either a change in the position of the French peasantry, a full destruction of the remnants of feudalism and opening up the way for private economic activity, which could be achieved only through revolution, or the continuation of the miserable existence of the basic toiling population and the undermining of the entire economy of France. So and only so stood the «peasant question» on the eve of the fall of the old order.

**The Manufacturing Stage of French Industry.**

The feudal relations also presented a serious hindrance for the development of French industry. Already in the second half of the 18th century large manufactures began to develop in France. The manufacture of gobelin (embroidered brocades and carpets) in Paris, the woolen manufacture of the Van-Robe Bros., in Picardy, the metal plant of Dietrich in Lorraine, which concentrated under one roof hundreds of workers, were not the only exceptions. However the general number of such centralized large manufactures was still not very great. The disintegrating but still existing guild order, with its restrictive regulations prohibiting the increase of the number of hired workers, the petty capricious regulation of production, the authorized system of organization of the manufacture, which demanded a special king's patent each time permitting them to be open — all of this had greatly hindered the development of centralized manufacture. The special king's decrees even regulated, for example, the length and the width of the material, the thickness of the thread, the colour of the fabrics, etc.

«I saw in the morning how 80, 90 to 100 pieces of goods were cut up. I observed this scene every day in the course of several years. All of this was done on a basis of the rules and at the order of the minister. Why? Only because the material was uneven or was not woven correctly.» That is the way one of the trade inspectors of that time wrote.

In search for cheap labour hands, seeking freedom from the guild restrictions of economic activity, French industry went from the city to the village. Here was developing a decentralized, «scattered» manufacture, typical for France of the 18th century.

The merchant-entrepreneurs were opening up special distributing offices to which thousands of neighbouring peasants would flock, to receive the raw material, to turn in the ready work, and receive for it pay in accordance with the established scale.

There were very few workers directly in the shop of the merchant-manufacturer as a rule, but, on the other hand, very frequently the entire region was subordinated to his influence. The village handicraftsman-artisan was losing his former independence; he was falling into the clutches of the large merchant-manufacturer, and in his economic position he closely approached that of a common labourer.

Alongside with the centralized manufacture of the big cities this village industry was strongly undermining the guild order, the annulment of which was the necessary pre-requisite for the free development of large industry.

The process of the introduction of machines into the French textile industry had begun. It is true that their number in France at that time was still not very great.

On the whole, French industry was going through the manufacturing stage — the eve of the industrial revolution. The task which confronted it, that of changing over into large machine production was, as we have seen, hindered by a number of feudal remnants.

**The Narrowness of the Internal Market.**

*The narrowness of the internal market*, the insignificance of the purchasing power of the basic mass of the population — the peasantry — which presented an insignificant demand for the products of French industry, served as a great hindrance in the development of French capitalism. The peasantry was compelled to get along with the products which could be obtained from their own family. The French peasants were going barefoot or wearing wooden shoes without hose. This astonished one of the English travellers who went to France on the eve of the revolution. «The fact, — he wrote, — that the poor do not use leather or woollen goods must be recognized as the greatest evil for industry.» (Translated from the Russian.)

This narrowness of the internal market pressed on French industry and compelled it to extend mainly those spheres of industry which were intended for the satisfaction of the requirements and caprices of the moneyed strata of the population, — the French nobility, bourgeois circles, or for the preparation of those luxury articles which could stand the high cost of shipment into other countries. The production of silk, woolen, linen and cotton goods and various articles of luxury were the main spheres of French industry. French perfume, soap, powder, and embroidery were famous throughout entire Europe and found a wide market among the ruling classes of various countries.

In addition, pre-revolutionary France was divided into a number of districts fenced off from each other by tariff barriers. In transferring goods from one district into another, it was necessary to pay an endless amount of the most varied duties and extortions.

In additions to that, a number of districts still preserved their own system of weights and measures, as in feudal times, and their variety in turn also hindered the development of internal trade.

The low level of demand for the articles of French industry, the guild order, the petty regulations and the special system requiring permission for the opening of large manufacturing enterprises retarded and delayed the coming of the industrial revolution. This placed French industry in an exceedingly disadvantageous position in comparison with English industry. To the extent that English industry was going over to machine production, its technical supremacy over French industry was ever more increasing. English goods were found to be better and cheaper than the French, and were driving the French goods from the market. As a result of this French foreign trade was suffering more and more from the competition of the English merchant.

The indignation of the French bourgeoisie reached a limit in 1786 when the French government concluded a commercial agreement

with England, lowering the duties on the import of English goods into France in return for the lowering of English duties on French wine. This was very definitely a sacrifice of the interests of the French bourgeoisie in favour of the landed nobility of France.

*The annulment of all feudal restriction, the full freedom of private economic activity, the raising of the purchasing capacity of the French population for the purpose of the extension of the internal market, an active foreign policy in defence of the interests of French commerce and industry and among it the struggle against English competition—such were the conditions which became necessary for the further capitalist development of French industry.*

## § 5. The Class Division and Political Order in Pre-Revolutionary France.

### Classes and Estates.

The entire population of France was divided into three estates: clergy, nobility and the third estate. The first estates entered into the composition of one class of large landowners. Their rights and privileges were conditioned and established by a number of laws. The rest of the population of France — the financial, commercial-industrial, city petty bourgeoisie, peasants and workers entered into the composition of a third estate<sup>1</sup> with absolutely no rights.

### The Nobility and the Clergy.

The nobility and the higher clergy were the privileged estates. On the eve of the revolution, out of a total population of 25,000,000 in France they numbered 270,000. These two estates were the ruling upper strata of France under the old order. They enjoyed many advantages and privileges and had virtually no obligations.

The entire state apparatus of old France had for its task the protection of their interests. Gigantic land property was concentrated in the hands of the nobility; they occupied leading positions in the state apparatus and held the commanding posts in the army.

The nobility was almost completely freed from the payment of taxes. At the same time they, themselves, were collecting yearly from the peasantry up to 100,000,000 livres in the form of feudal duties. In addition they received large sums as pay and gifts from the state treasury.

The highest court nobility divided among themselves 30—40 million livres which was spent yearly on the maintenance of the king's court, about 30 million livres on state pensions, 48 million livres on pay to 12,000 officers of the French army and finally tens and hundreds of millions of livres for carrying on varied honorable duties and services, created especially for the purpose of filling the pockets of the nobility. During the last fifteen years before the revolution the court nobility alone received over 200 million livres.

<sup>1</sup> The classes in a feudal society come out under the cover of estates with rights and obligations of each estate determined by the law. With the disintegration of feudalism, the development of capitalist relations and the formation of new classes, the old division into estates does not any longer coincide with the new class division of society. It is such a situation that we observe on the eve of the Great French Revolution when several classes enter into the composition of a single third estate.

The court nobility was followed by the *provincial nobility* which lived on the income from their estates and held on firmly to the feudal duties which were levied on the peasants.

However the process of capitalist development, which was going on in France, was embracing within the circle of its influence also a part of the landed nobility. In France, as well as in England, on the eve of the great bourgeois revolution, a strata of «new nobility» was formed which was drawn into the circle of bourgeois relations.

This «new nobility» was closely connected with the bourgeoisie.

The *clergy* which was closely connected with the nobility was the second privileged estate in France. The class basis of the higher circles of the French clergy (landed property) was the same as that of the nobility; on the eve of the revolution the French church owned about one third of the entire land area of France. The clergy was exempt, as were the nobility, from the payment of taxes and lived on the income from church land and the special tax in favour of the church («tithe») was levied on the entire population of France.

These two estates, the nobility and the higher clergy, were the parasites who lived at the expense of the toiling masses. The bishops and archbishops, who were generally the descendants of the old nobility, received yearly on the average 100,000 livres each.

The income of cardinal Rogan was as high as 1 million livres. At the same time the parish clergymen generally lived in poverty and viewed with hatred the «kings of the church», who were receiving large incomes. These clergymen stood closer to the needs of the peasantry and of the city poor. Their material condition depended on the money which they collected from the peasant population for religious ceremonies. It is therefore not surprising that at times the parish clergymen sided with the toilers against the feudal nobility.

#### **The Absolute Monarchy of the 18th Century.**

France of the 18th century was an absolute unrestricted monarchy. At the head of it stood the king, according to his own arbitrary view, ruled the destiny of all the people as well as that of the individual subjects. The unlimited power of the French king served as an expression of unlimited power of the ruling class of France, the large feudal landlords. The French king, himself, was in possession of large landed property and emphasized his firm ties with the feudal nobility. The entire state apparatus was in the hands of the nobility; the ministers were appointed from the ranks of the nobility or higher clergy; only hereditary nobility could occupy the commanding posts in the army.

In the provinces the nobles from the bureaucratic nobility were appointed as commissioners by the king. Their power within the given territory was absolute. The 25 million people of the country were compelled to submit unconditionally to the 35 commissaries appointed by the king. It is therefore understood that such a system of administration opened the way for arbitrary rule and abuses on the part of the local as well as the central powers. The slightest attempt of exposure in the press of any kind of abuse was punished with merciless severity. On the instruction of the strict censorship the «dangerous» books were ordered to be burned up. Not only the authors but even the publishers and the salesmen were persecuted. The French catholic church — the bulwark of autocracy — fought viciously against any new ideas. The fossilized dogmatists of the catholic church had to serve as the expression of the stability of those feudal relations which served as its foundation.



This absolutism preserved the feudal order in the village, this absolutism stood on guard for the privileges of the masters landlords, this absolutism defended the ruling position of the French church. In all the spheres of national life the monarchy of absolutism of the 18th century was the closest barrier on the road to capitalist development of the country. And the bourgeoisie had to strike at this barrier in order to clear the way for the development of bourgeois society.

#### **The Third Estate.**

With the exception of the 270,000 nobility and clergy, the entire remaining 25 million of the French population represented the so-called «third estate». The class composition of the «third estate» was very motley: it included the large and petty city bourgeoisie and finally the entire peasantry which constituted the basic mass of the population.

#### **The Peasantry.**

We have already seen how difficult was the position of the French peasantry. The mass of the peasants was in a condition of chronic starvation. The roads of France were covered with beggars and vagabonds, on the eve of the revolution their numbers were over 1 million. Unrest among the peasants and hunger revolts were very frequent occurrences in pre-revolutionary France. In Normandy peasant revolts took place in 1725, 1739, 1752, 1764, 1765, 1766, 1767 and 1768. Peasant revolts also took place in the seventies in Rheims, Dijon, Pontoise and a number of other places in France. In Dauphiné and Auvergne the peasants broke into the grain warehouses and carried away grain at prices set by themselves. In Arles 2,000 armed peasants met at the city gates demanding bread. They were dispersed by soldiers. The French peasantry, which hated the feudal order, was one of the basic moving forces of the revolution. *The full annulment of feudal duties, relief from the burden of taxation and the extension of lands* — such were the basic demands of the French peasantry. However the oppressed, the downtrodden, and unorganized peasantry could gain its victory only by coming out under the leadership of some other class, either the bourgeoisie, or the proletariat.

«.... Organization, political consciousness in their struggles, their centralization (necessary for the victory), all this can be given to the scattered millions of the agricultural petty property owners *only* by the leadership of them either on the part of the bourgeoisie or on the part of the proletariat» (*Lenin*).

#### **The Proletariat.**

We have already seen that France of the 18th century had no machine shop factory production or railways; neither did it have a shop-factory proletariat. Into the composition of the working class at that time entered artisan workers of large manufacture, the artisans working for the merchant-manufacturers, the workers' apprentices and the apprentices of the small shops, and finally a large number of seasonal workers, mainly the builders, brick layers, carpenters, etc., who flocked into Paris and other large cities during the spring and the summer, also the day workers and the unskilled workers.

The conditions of the working class were very difficult. Wages were very low. The working day extended from early morning to late at night. The slightest mistake was punishable by fines; even the home life of the workers was subjected to strict supervision.

The artisans working under a forestaller in the decentralized manufacture were subjected to severe exploitation. The low price paid for piece work, the recklessness of the forestaller in making seconds, the loans extended to them at usurious rates of interest, the irregular distribution of work in order to intimidate the workers with the threat of hunger, such were the conditions in which a worker found himself in the decentralized industry. In order to make ends meet, he worked from morning till late at night, and was forced to enlist the help of his wife and even that of his small young children. The conditions of the workers' apprentices in the guilds were also very hard since they were subjected to merciless exploitation by the guild master. The workers also suffered very much from the high cost of food products. The prices which were greatly increased through the custom duties which were collected at the city gates, and due to the taxes and extortions made by the government.

Frequently, under the old order, strikes flared up in the old manufactories, at times taking the form of open revolts. Already in the middle of the 18th century, a strike, which lasted several months, took place in the Van Robe Bros. woolen manufacture. Forty years before the revolution, the city of Lyons was held several days by the revolting workers.

However the working class of France at that time was not as yet separated from the revolutionary democracy and was still «almost welded to it» (*Lenin*).

It had neither a party of its own which could lead its revolutionary activities, nor its own experience of class struggle. The only organization which existed at that time was the brotherhood of the guild apprentices and, here and there, the mutual aid societies. The working class was not as yet able to come out as a leader in the revolutionary struggle of the toilers. It was not as yet able to lead the revolutionary attack against feudalism; it came out in a political struggle on the extreme left flank of the revolutionary democracy. However, already at that time the workers represented a moving force of the revolution, one of the greatest, revolutionary forces, particularly in Paris where the workers constituted a considerable part of the population.

#### The Bourgeoisie.

In the first period of the revolution the leading force of the «third estate» in the struggle against the old order was the bourgeoisie. The economic strength of the French bourgeoisie grew constantly during the course of several centuries. The growing trade and industry of France served as its foundation. The wealthy bourgeois competed in luxury with the distinguished nobility of France. They built homes designed by the best architects and artists of France. Their children received a splendid education, and in their luxurious reception rooms gathered the advanced representatives of contemporary science and art.

Concentrating in their hands industry and commerce, the French bourgeoisie competed with the nobility and the church even in the sphere of agricultural economy. During the last decades before the revolution the French bourgeoisie began to buy up lands. Merchants who acquired wealth through commercial operations and the large manufacturers were buying vast estates for themselves.

With the growth of its economic power its class consciousness also grew. It felt ever more sharply its position without any political rights, it felt ever more painfully the inability of the nobility government to satisfy its interests.

This contradiction between the economic strength and the lack of political rights connected with the order of the absolute monarchy that pushed the French bourgeoisie — on the path of the revolution. However not all the strata of the bourgeoisie were revolutionary. For instance, the financial bourgeoisie of France (the bourgeois farmers and bankers) were closely connected with the foundation of the old order and were trying only to reform it. The pay-off system of collecting taxes which brought to the tax-farmers big profits could exist only under the old order. In depositing large sums of money into the treasury the tax-farmers received from the government the right to collect taxes from the population and robbed the peasants shamelessly. In loaning large sums of money to the government and receiving high interest, the bankers were by no means interested in liquidating the old order. However, they feared that the further rapacious management of the nobility would lead the government to bankruptcy and the subsequent non payment of debts. For this reason they were prone to establish a certain control over state income and expenditures, without, however, entering on the path of revolution.

The *commercial-industrial bourgeoisie* had a much more determined political sentiment. The entire economic policy of the monarchy, of the nobility which hindered the turn of the country towards industrial capitalism pushed the bourgeoisie on the path of revolution. The commercial-industrial bourgeoisie demanded a radical reconstruction of all the social relations — the destruction of the privileges of the state, the full freedom of private economic activity, the participation in the leadership of the political life of the country, — in a word the destruction of the feudal remnants and the clearing of ground for the further capitalist development of France. For this reason, as we shall see further, the commercial-industrial bourgeoisie played the rôle of one of the leading forces of the revolution in its first period. However, the bourgeoisie could not lead the bourgeois revolution to the end, and for this reason its attempt to enter into an agreement with the forces of the old order were soon exposed. «It is advantageous for the bourgeoisie to base itself on certain old remnants against the proletariat, for instance on the monarchy, on the permanent army, etc. It is advantageous for the bourgeoisie that the bourgeois revolution should not sweep aside in a very decisive manner all the remnants of the old, but should leave some of them, i. e. that this revolution should not be fully consistent, should not follow to the very end, should not be decisive and merciless» (*Lenin*).

#### **The City Petty Bourgeoisie.**

The guild masters, owners of small shops and independent artisans constituted the most numerous section of the city population of that time. Such artisans were particularly numerous in Paris, in the suburbs where were concentrated, since the old times, enterprises producing articles of luxury for the French and foreign nobility.

The city petty bourgeoisie suffered keenly from the yoke of taxation and the lack of political rights, from the monopoly and privileges of the nobility, and it strove for the full destruction of the old order. Not bound by large property holdings, nor by fear of the lower strata of the city population, which were close to it because of their material position, the petty bourgeois was ready to act in a determined revolutionary manner for the overthrow of the old order. However, developing capitalism was also a serious threat to the petty bourgeoisie. To the extent that every large enterprise constituted a blow against the small enterprise, to that extent the petty bourgeoisie, in struggling against the old order, wanted at the same time, to place limitations upon the development of large industry and of large industrial capitalism. This explains the twofold character of the petty bourgeoisie. On the one hand, it is fighting against large capital which is bankrupting it, against the large bourgeoisie, and on the other hand, it wishes to strengthen its own position, as the position of the small property owner against the rising proletariat. Such a task, in essence, is insolvable and the petty bourgeoisie involuntarily and inevitably leans alternatively either towards the bourgeoisie or towards the proletariat. That is the reason for the wavering, unstable position of the petty bourgeoisie in capitalist society. However, in the epoch of the overthrow of absolutism, the city petty bourgeoisie in France came out as one of the moving forces against the old order and went together with the workers and peasants in the attack against feudalism.

This explains the determined revolutionary rôle which the petty bourgeoisie of France and its leaders played in the epoch of the Great French Revolution.

## § 6. The Ideology of the Rising Bourgeoisie.

The ideology of the bourgeoisie of the 18th century was the so-called «enlightenment philosophy».

Its world conception the revolutionary bourgeoisie of the 18th century based first of all in the creed of *domination of reason* through «enlightenment». The philosophy of the feudal epoch which subordinated reason to the faith in the domination of church and religion was swept aside as unnecessary. In the opinion of the bourgeois philosophers of the 18th century reason and enlightenment were to free man from all prejudices; it was only necessary to destroy all restrictions, all chains with which the church and the feudal order had shackled mankind. After that would come «the natural order» which would give the possibility of realizing the natural and inviolable rights inherent to every man.

This theory of *natural rights* served the bourgeoisie as a weapon in its struggle against feudalism. From the point of view of reason and «inherent», «natural» rights of man it subjected to criticism the entire old order, all the feudal institutions. The bourgeoisie advanced its class demands as the demands of mankind, as its «natural», «inherent» rights. The philosopher-enlighteners opened their criticism of the old order with a struggle against the church which maintained the stability of the catholic dogmas against the new world conception.

**Voltaire**  
(1691—1778).

The famous philosopher of the 18th century Voltaire expressed the sentiments and class interests of the upper strata of the bourgeoisie and of the bourgeoisified nobility. He attacked with particular sharpness the catholic church. Voltaire demanded «the destruction of the old edifice of deceit, the confiscation of the landed property of the church, the destruction of the privileges of the clergy and their transfer to a salaried basis, placing the ministers of religious worship on the same level as that of state officials.

However the striving of Voltaire to «crush the vileness» (as he termed the church) existed side by side with the recognition of its necessity as an instrument for holding in subjection the lower classes. «If there were no god he would have to be invented», — stated Voltaire. In the opinion of Voltaire, «the mob has to be always kept in strict subordination. The common people are always rude and dull. They are oxen who must have a yoke, a driver and fodder». «When the mob begins to reason then everything is lost», — Voltaire affirmed. It is just for the purpose of bridling the masses that Voltaire considered it necessary to preserve both religion and the power of the king. Voltaire expects the realization of his ideas through the «enlightened king» he even carries on active and flattering correspondence at one time with the Prussian king and at other times with the Russian empress Catherine II.

**Montesquieu**  
(1689—1755).

Another ideologist of that time, *Montesquieu* went a little further in the sphere of political demands. In his famous production «*The Spirit of the Law*» he lauded the constitutional (limited) monarchy and was an ardent adherent of the English order. Montesquieu considered that for the purpose of limiting the monarchy it was necessary to introduce *division of power* which alone, in his opinion, was able to insure true freedom. Legislative power had to be placed in the hands of the peoples' representatives divided into two houses: the executive in the hands of the monarch and the judicial in the hands of elected judges. Montesquieu affirmed that everything would be lost if one and the same person or group of persons should administer all three forms of power.

**The Encyclopedists.**

To the extent that it became clear that the privileged estates would not make any concessions, the programme of the bourgeoisie became sharper and more definite. The faith in god gave place to materialism and atheism.

The younger generation of philosopher-enlighteners were grouped around the publication «*The Great Encyclopedia of Arts and Crafts*» the purpose of which was to summarize the results of scientific achievement in various spheres of knowledge and to popularize them among the wide public. The editors of the «*Encyclopedia*» were the philosopher *Diderot* and the mathematician *Dalambert*. Into its circle of contributors were drawn all the advanced thinkers of that time; hence they were named «encyclopedists». «*Encyclopedia*» subjected to severe criticism all the institutions of the old order. It was not in vain that the king's counsel decreed the destruction of the first two volumes of «*Encyclopedia*». However the encyclopedists who expressed the interests of the liberal bourgeoisie of the 18th century did not by any means demand the introduction of democracy and were ready to be satisfied with the constitutional (limited) monarchy. The power of the king had to serve for the bourgeoisie as a dependable defence against the «ignorant and senseless mob».

**Rousseau**  
(1712—1778).

Voltaire and Montesquieu, the encyclopedists in various forms (with various shadings) expressed the class interests of various sections of the bourgeoisified nobility and of the liberal bourgeoisie, which could not but «strive for freedom and rights because without this the domination of the bourgeoisie is not full, is not undivided, is not secure» (*Lenin*). But at the same time all of them reflected the fear of this liberal bourgeoisie before the movement of the masses. Hence arises the inconsistency and half-way policy of the bourgeois ideologists. For this reason the sharpest protests and attacks against the church, absolutism and feudal privileges came not from them, but from the ranks of the petty bourgeois democracy, the most outstanding representative of which was *Rousseau*. The ideas of Rousseau exerted a great influence on a number of leaders of the French Revolution, representing the interests of the city petty bourgeoisie and of the peasantry.

Coming from a petty bourgeois environment<sup>1</sup>, Rousseau sharply attacked big property and social inequality. «Inequality, stated Rousseau, leads to the situation where some are dying from hunger while others are suffocating from luxuries.» In his «*Meditations on the Origin of Inequality*» Rousseau asserted that the source of all evil and misfortune is the private ownership of land. However, from this Rousseau did not draw the deduction, that it was necessary to destroy private property. Rousseau fought only against the exceedingly large fortunes and was an ardent supporter of small private property. «For the improvement of the social or-

<sup>1</sup> Rousseau was the son of a Geneva watchmaker.

der it is necessary that everyone should have sufficient and that no one should have too much», wrote Rousseau. Rousseau stated his basic ideas in his famous «The Social Contract». In his opinion society arises through the mutual contract of individual persons entering into an agreement between themselves. The social ideal of Rousseau is the democratic republic of the small private property owners where every family satisfies on the whole its own requirements. In the philosophy of Rousseau was reflected the twofold character of the petty bourgeoisie and the small property owner.

The republic of petty property owners, which constituted the ideal of Rousseau, is an impossible fantasy. The equalising democracy of Rousseau is false when viewed from the point of view of the laws of development of commodity economy and of bourgeois society, but «this democracy is the truth of that peculiar historically conditioned democratic struggle of the peasant masses which constituted the inseparable element of the bourgeois transformation and a condition of its full victory» (Lenin).

The ideas of Rousseau were the expression «of the striving of the toiling millions of the petty bourgeoisie to *once and for all* put an end to the old feudal exploiters and an expression of the false hope of «at the same time» eliminating the new capitalist exploiters» (Lenin).

### **The Inception of Socialist Teachings.**

Shortly before the revolution the inception of socialist teachings appeared in France. «Only the common ownership of the land which existed in the epoch of primitive communism can make mankind happy», stated one of Rousseau's followers who had made further conclusions from his theory of equalization. «In society», asserts another philosopher, «nothing must belong to anyone individually as his property, except the objects necessary for the satisfaction of his own requirements, pleasure and daily work. All the citizens are to be maintained by and receive work from the state». However these socialist ideas were only «a symptom, an expression, a forerunner of that class which borne by capitalism grew up towards the beginning of the 20th century into a mass power capable of putting an end to capitalism and irresistibly moving towards it» (Lenin).

The socialist teachings in the 18th century bore a predominantly agrarian character; they argued about the evil of the private property of land but not of all the implements and means of production.

Such a situation was brought about by the economic level of development existing in France at that time at the end of the 18th century, France being still predominantly an agrarian country, with an industry and a working class of the manufacturing period.

## **§ 7. The Epoch of the Constituent and Legislative Assembly.**

### **The Immediate Causes of the Revolution.**

*The impossibility of the further capitalist development of France under the conditions of the old order* — this was the basic reason of the Great French Revolution.

But there were also more immediate causes which brought about the revolutionary explosion just at the end of the 18th century in 1789.

State finances were in an exceedingly difficult position.

On the eve of the revolution the deficit <sup>1</sup> had already reached 43% of the entire state budget <sup>2</sup>. In search of financial resources the government sold out the right to collect taxes for many years in advance and contracted numerous loans. The general indebtedness of France reached 4½ billions, while the yearly income equalled two and a half billion livres. A complete disorder reigned in the administration of finances. The interest on loans and the expenditures on the maintenance of the court and the army consumed yearly over three fourths of the state

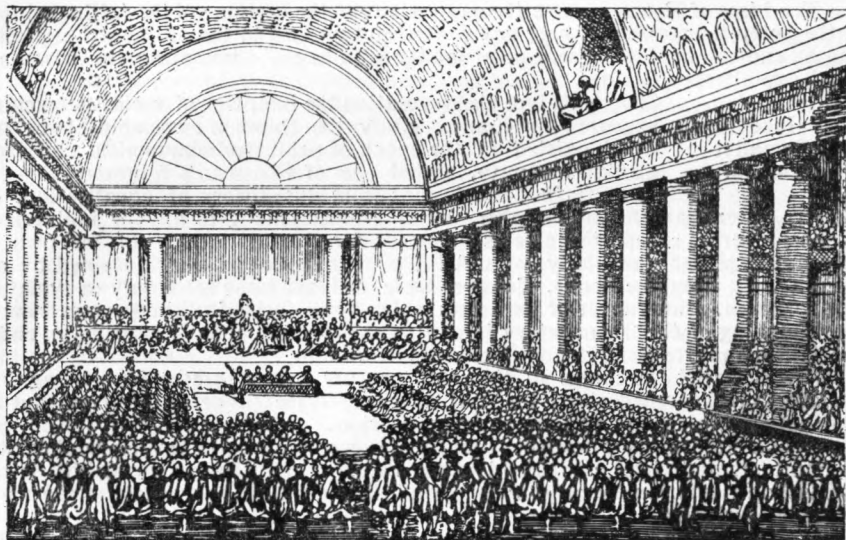
<sup>1</sup> A deficit in the Government budget, when expenditure exceeds income.

<sup>2</sup> Budget — the yearly statement of the Government income and expenditures.



budget. It became ever-more difficult to even pay the interest on the loans, particularly after the participation of France in the war for independence of the American colonies, which resulted in large expenditures. At the same time the delay in payment aroused considerable dissatisfaction among the moneyed bourgeoisie, which was the main holder of the state obligations. It feared that the state would declare itself bankrupt and would stop all payment. The contracting of new loans was becoming impossible: a financial catastrophe was threatening.

The financial disorganization was accompanied by a crisis in industry. English commodities, which were freely imported into France



The meeting of the States General.

in accordance with the agreement of 1786, undermined the market for articles of French industry. The Russian-Turkish war of 1787—1791 struck a powerful blow at the market for French goods in the Levant. This brought about a crisis in French industry. Unemployment embraced over 200,000 workers.

Finally the harvest failure of 1788 struck hard at the agricultural economy which even before was in an exceedingly difficult position. A situation was created under which «the lower classes of the population did not want to live in the old way, and the upper classes could not rule any longer in the old way» (*Lenin*). The need and misery of the oppressed classes was exceedingly sharpened; and their activity also increased; mass revolts of workers and peasants, of the city and the village poor began to flare up. Hunger riots and uprisings were flaring up here and there and troops were sent to break them up. In Paris unrest was taking place among the factory workers. Unrest was also spreading among the seasonal workers who came

to Paris for work and could not find any on account of the general stagnation of business.

The attempts of the monarchy to carry out some reforms in order to find a way out of the situation did not lead anywhere and only emphasized the fact that the «upper classes» could no longer rule in the old way.

Thus the general controller<sup>1</sup> Turgot, who attempted to make several steps towards adaptation of the old monarchy to the new bourgeois order, suffered a complete failure. Turgot secured from Louis the 16th an agreement to withdraw several indirect taxes from the hands of the buyers for the annulment of guilds. Turgot proposed to carry out the buying up of the feudal duties and the annulment of privileges of the estate. However the first attempts of Turgot evoked a storm of indignation among the privileged. Against Turgot was formed a strong party of dissatisfied elements from the nobility, higher clergy and large buyers of taxes. Turgot was forced to resign and the reforms carried out by him were annulled. The nobility and the higher clergy argued strongly against any encroachment on their rights and privileges.

In a word, the ruling classes exposed, in the face of the deep economic and political crisis a lack of unanimity. The split in their ranks became a fact. And through this split in the edifice of the old monarchy began to break through the surging discontent of the people. The revolution was closely approaching.

**The Call of the States General.** In search for the way out of this situation the king was compelled to announce that the States General which had not convened for over a hundred years — since 1614 — would be called.

The States General had originated in the 14th century and was the assembly of the representatives of the three estates with each estate meeting and voting separately from the other. In passing a decision on the important questions, the opinions of the nobility and the clergy, which represented basically one and the same class of large land-owners, generally coincided and the third estate was therefore left in the minority. Now the monarchy desiring to receive from the third estate an agreement to the introduction of new taxes granted its representatives six hundred places in the States General and to the nobility and the clergy three hundred places each. However in the decree on the convening of the States General nothing was stated about the method of voting. With a method of individual voting the third estate would have as many votes (600) as the clergy and nobility taken together (300 and 300). While on the other hand, if the voting took place by estates, then no matter how large would be the number of the representatives of the third estate its vote would just the same be counted for one against the two votes of the nobility and the clergy. For this reason already on the eve of the convening of the States General the question as to the order of voting aroused passionate disputes.

Election to the States General took place in the midst of general excitement; agitation was going on throughout the country, many pamphlets and leaflets appeared, defending the interests of various classes. The wishes and requests of the population were also expressed in special «books of complaint», directives, which were made up during the elections to the States General. The directives given by the nobility

<sup>1</sup> Controller — corresponds to the minister of finance.

and the clergy eloquently, argued for the necessity of leaving intact the basis of the old order, the estate privileges of the nobility and the clergy.

In the directives of the bourgeoisie were clearly formulated its class programme demands for political rights, the annulment of the estates privileges, the rights of private economic action and the right to use property without any hindrance. The bourgeoisie preferred to remain silent on the question of the annulment of the feudal duties which were levied against the peasantry.

On the other hand, the directives of the peasantry were full of complaints against the shortage of land, the high rental, the burden of taxation and the feudal duties, the oppressions and brutality of the seigneurs who had seized the common lands.

**The Method of Elections.** Electoral rights were granted only to those who paid direct taxes. Furthermore it was necessary to live in one place for a certain period of time, to have one's own dwelling, etc. *Direct* elections<sup>1</sup> were established only for the privileged; the elections of the deputies of the third estate, on the other hand, went through two, and even four stages.

It is understood that under such conditions the peasants, workers, and petty artisans were pushed aside and into the composition of the States General from the third estates were elected the representatives from the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois intellectuals. Among the deputies from the clergy, alongside with the bishops and abbots, there were many parish clergymen. The peasants and workers were not elected to the States General.

**The Opening of the States General.** The States General was convened on May 5, 1789. The declaration of the government was announced at the official opening from which it was clear that the States General must limit itself to approving additional taxation and must not undertake any kind of serious reforms. The bourgeoisie was not content with this proposition. The bourgeoisie did not want to give any money to the government without establishing its own control over it, without compelling it to serve its interests, the interests of the bourgeoisie. In order to achieve its aim it seized upon the question of voting which as was already stated was not mentioned in the decree on convening the States General. During the course of one whole month the deputies of the bourgeoisie attempted to prevail upon the nobility and the clergy to agree to a personal vote. The privileged estates did not agree as a personal vote would turn the decision on all the question over into the hands of the bourgeoisie. This finally led to a situation where on June 17, 1789 the deputies of the third estate, feeling the support of the wide masses, declared themselves the *national* (later *constituent*) *assembly* and proposed to the deputies of the nobility and the clergy to join them under the threat of not recognizing their mandates. Fearing the break up of the assembly by force the deputies of the third estate passed a decision prohibiting the

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<sup>1</sup> The *direct* elections are such elections in which the population itself elects the deputies; under the elections of the second degree the population first elects its electors, who in turn elect the deputies.

government from collecting any taxes without the approval of the Constituent Assembly.

The parish clergymen were the first to respond to the call of the third estate. Shortly after joined the group of «new nobility» which was connected by common interests with the commercial and the industrial bourgeoisie. However the court and a considerable section of the privileged protested. On the king's order the session hall of the third estate was closed. Then (on June 20, 1789) the deputies met in a private building (in a hall for playing ball) and swore not to disperse until a constitution was adopted — the basic laws for the administration of the country. In response to this «rebel» decision the king again convened an official meeting of all the deputies and ordered all the estates to disperse and meet separately. However, the deputies of the third estate did not submit to this instruction. The hopelessness of the situation compelled the government to make concessions and the king ordered the nobility and the clergy to join the third estate.

**The Revolutionary  
Activities  
of the Masses,  
the Capture of  
the Bastille on  
June 14, 1789.**

However with this concession the government only strove to gain time. The government was sending troops to Paris and Versailles in order to break up the Constituent Assembly. In the beginning of July, the king dismissed a popular minister of finances Necker, who was ready to make an agreement with the bourgeoisie. This was a direct challenge on the part of the king thrown into the face of the broad masses of the population.

In the winter of 1788—89 the revolts of the peasants did not cease. Revolutionary unrest gripped the cities. The masses of the toilers were waiting with impatience for the States General to improve their position. For this reason, rumors about the impending break up of the national assembly further intensified the unrest among the masses. The news of the removal of Necker and the formation of a new reactionary ministry by the king was a spark which fell into a powder house. «To arms!» rang the shouts. Warehouses containing arms were raided; the population seized guns and even several cannons. In this the workers and artisan population of the Parisian suburb, *Saint Antoine and Saint Marceau*, played a particularly active rôle.

Tocsin sounded throughout Paris. In the morning of July 14, 1789 the people marched on the Bastille, an ancient fortress which could serve as the basic point for the king's troops. The people also saw in the Bastille the personification of the old order, since this fortress served at the time as a jail for state offenders.

The revolting masses besieged the fortress. The cannons of the fortress thundered in vain, — the besiegers bravely marched to battle. They paid no attention to either danger or death. On July 14, 1789 the Bastille was taken<sup>1</sup>. Part of the troops went over to the side of the workers and artisan masses of Paris.

«But this is a revolt», exclaimed Louis the 16th when the events were reported to him. «No revolt, Sire, but a revolution,» — answered one of his court attendants.

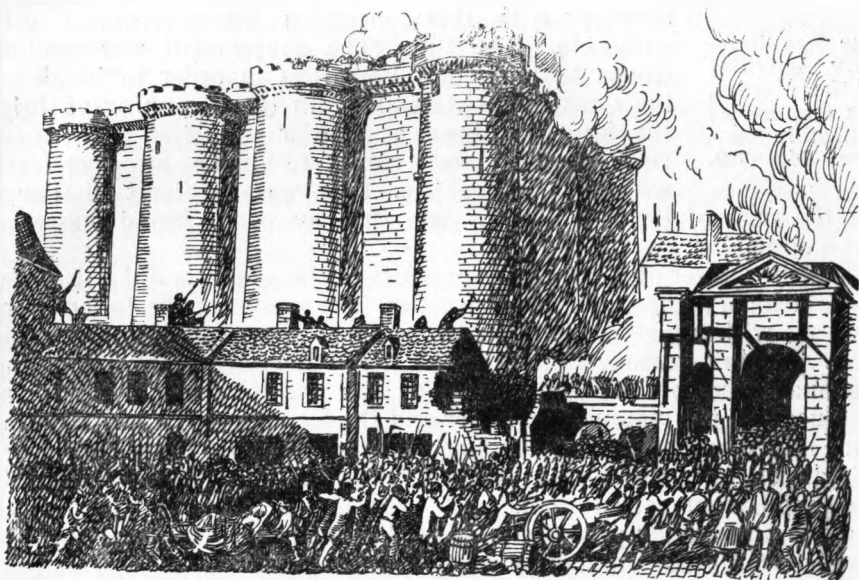
The people's uprising freed the National Assembly from the threat of being dispersed. The king was compelled to give orders to take the

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<sup>1</sup> Until the present time the French bourgeoisie still celebrates the day of the taking of the Bastille, July 14.

troops out of Paris and recognize the National Assembly. The bourgeoisie hastened to strengthen for itself the fruits of victory.

Several days before the taking of the Bastille the bourgeoisie had already created a special national guard — an armed force into which were admitted only the well-to-do citizens. At the head of the national guard was placed the Marquis La Fayette, one of the representatives of the bourgeoisified strata of the French nobility, which went over to the side of the third estate. The national guard was organized by the bourgeoisie not only for the struggle against the old order, but also in case of necessity for defence from the pressure of the masses.



The storming of the Bastille. July 14th, 1789.

At the same time the bourgeoisie took measures in order to take the weapons away from «unreliable» elements. Following the capture of the Bastille the revolutionary wave rolled over entire France. The breaking up of the old government machine began. In the city, the officials of the old order were replaced, and new city self-governing organs of the bourgeois power were elected. Everywhere the bourgeois national guard was organized for the defence of the new order. Everywhere, as in Paris, because of the movement of the broad masses of the toilers, victory fell into the hands of the bourgeoisie.

**The Large Bourgeoisie and the Peasantry.**

*The mass peasant movement also took on a broad aspect. The peasants took up arms. Armed with scythes, forks and chains they burned down the feudal castles, destroying the documents of the abhorred feudal duties and at times killed the seigneurs. The tocsin rang throughout France. A section of the frightened nobility fled abroad.*

The propertied bourgeoisie sitting in the Constituent Assembly, was horrified by the agrarian revolution. It was in possession of a considerable share of the lands of the nobility and received income from the feudal duties. It was afraid that the revolting peasants, having destroyed the feudal property, would not only harm it, but would later on also encroach on the bourgeois property. Punitive expeditions were immediately moved into action for the suppression of the revolutionary peasants' movement.

However peasant revolts suppressed in one locality would flare up in another. The whole of France was engulfed in an agrarian revolution. Willy nilly the bourgeoisie had to think about the peasantry. At a night session on August 4, 1789, the frightened priests and the landlords themselves proposed to annul some of the feudal rights. At this the nobility readily pointed to the burden of the church taxes while the priests talked eloquently of the hunting of the nobility which was ruining the peasants' field. So every one was ready to reject those rights which did not belong to him. After long disputes it was decided to cancel the privileges of the estate, the church «tithe», the rights of hunting and some other antiquated and less important rights of the landlords. An official declaration was published regarding the destruction of the feudal duties. However it remained on paper. Only those duties were annulled which were connected personally with the peasant himself (the landlord courts, etc.), however, according to the Constituent Assembly, the peasants had to buy out the duties levied on the land and, in addition, at very difficult and impossible conditions.

The purchasing sum, established by the Constituent Assembly, exceeded by 20—25 times the yearly amount of duties; the peasant had to pay off all the duties at once and this had to be done by the entire village, as the entire purchasing sum had to be paid at once. For the purpose of relief from the feudal duties, the Constituent Assembly proposed to the French peasantry to pay out on the whole about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  billion livres. It was clear that the purchasing sum could not possibly be paid out and the feudal duties continued to weigh heavily on the French peasantry.

*And so the peasant question remained unsolved during the existence of the Constituent Assembly.* In spite of the threats of the Constituent Assembly the peasants continued to refuse to carry out the feudal duties and continued to carry on a revolutionary struggle against the feudal yoke.

#### **The Movement of the Masses in Paris.**

The Constituent Assembly also did nothing to relieve the condition of the city poor. The population of Paris and its suburbs, suffering from horrible need, was restless. On October 5, 1789 the Paris poor, mainly women, moved toward Versailles and forced the king and his family to move from Versailles <sup>1</sup> to Paris. The king became virtually a prisoner of the revolutionary people.

The revolutionary movement of the peasants and of the toiling masses frightened the big bourgeoisie and it began to seek agreement

<sup>1</sup> Versailles — the seat of the king located 20 kilometres from Paris. To this place was also transferred the Constituent Assembly.



with the forces of the old order. The bourgeoisie was already afraid of the further development of the revolution and began, first of all, to take care of the protection of its own and of the landlords' property from the encroachment of the masses. Already on August 10, 1789 the Constituent Assembly, frightened by the peasants' revolt, passed a law suppressing disorders directed «against the violators of the social order», and encroaching on the «sacred rights» of the landlords. In October 1789, after the march of the Paris poor on Versailles, the Constituent Assembly passed a law declaring martial law and permitting the authorities to shoot at an unarmed mob if it refused to disperse. At the same time began the persecution of the revolutionary newspapers.

Thus, the big bourgeoisie refused to complete the bourgeois revolution, i. e., to destroy feudalism in France and to eliminate the defender of the feudal order — the monarchy. With fundamental, moving strength the peasants and plebians revolted, thereby guaranteeing the end of the revolution.

**«The Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen» and the Constitution of 1791.**

The constitution of 1791, passed by the Constituent Assembly, came as a result of a deal between the big bourgeoisie and the landlords. It was preceded by the «Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen» already passed in 1789.

The famous «Declaration of Rights» of 1789 was the manifesto of the French revolutionary bourgeoisie of the 18th century. It triumphantly declared the basis of the bourgeois society: the annulment of estates and the state privileges, equality before the law, the principle of the supremacy of the people, the inviolable «natural» rights of every man and citizen.

1. «The people are born and remain free and equal in their rights; social differences can be based only on the common good.»

2. «The aim of every political union is the preservation of the inherent and inviolable rights of man; these rights are: freedom, property, safety and resistance to oppression», — pronounced the declaration.

The declaration established the inviolability of the individual, the freedom of speech, press, religious belief, the right of the citizens themselves or through their representatives to pass laws and to establish these or other taxes.

These revolutionary slogans were proclaimed by the bourgeoisie as the eternal truth for all times and for all peoples. In reality however «the Declaration of Rights» was the expression of the basis of the bourgeois society which was coming to replace the feudal society. By the «equality» the bourgeoisie understood only the equality before the law and the freedom was only the freedom to manage the bourgeois private property. The class bourgeois character of the «Declaration of Rights» can be especially clearly seen in the second <sup>1</sup> and the seventeenth articles of the «Declaration» where the private property of the bourgeoisie is twice proclaimed as the sacred and inviolable right.

«Inasmuch as the right of property is sacred and inviolable, no one therefore may be deprived of it except when it is demanded by the legally established social necessity and under the conditions of its being previously compensated», — states article 17.

The «Declaration of Rights» does not mention a word either about freedom of assembly or the freedom of unions which are so important to the toilers. And of course

<sup>1</sup> Cited above.

nothing was stated regarding the way of insuring the real economic equality of all citizens.

However in the 18th century in the struggle against feudalism, against the feudal privileges and against absolutism, the principles expressed in the «Declaration of Rights» were *revolutionary* principles and the «Declaration of Rights» had a great significance. It was read with admiration not only in France but also in other European countries. Even in autocratic Russia, the land of serfdom, its reverberations were heard.

The constitution of 1791, written in the course of two and half years, was the creation of the bourgeoisie, *which had already made a deal with the landlords*. In this constitution instead of the proclaimed «Declaration of equality» the citizens were divided into «active» and «passive», i. e. those deprived of the electoral rights. Only the well-to-do citizens were included among the active ones; of the 25 million population of France there were only 4 million of such active citizens. Only the active citizens had a right to elect the organs of local administration, only they had the right to join the national guard which thus became a purely bourgeois armed force. The entire remaining population was deprived of the right to bear arms. «Those who have nothing are not members of society,» — stated deputies of the bourgeoisie in the Constituent Assembly. «The administration and legislation is the business of the property owners, because only they are interested in it.»



Robespierre.

The defenders of the interests of the petty bourgeoisie and of the city poor met this decision with a sharp protest.

«If only one part of the nation possesses sovereign rights, and the other part is simply subjects, then such a political order is nothing else but a real aristocracy. And what an aristocracy! The most impossible of all: the aristocracy of the rich under the yoke of which you wish to place the people who have just freed themselves from the yoke of the feudal aristocracy, who then authorized you to deprive the people of their right?» — indignantly inquired Robespierre, the leader of the petty bourgeoisie.

A lawyer by profession, Maximilian Robespierre, had already for a long time attracted to himself the attention of the revolutionary circles by his ardent speeches. The activities of Robespierre against the wide authorities given to the king, against the prohibiting of the passive citizens from joining the ranks of the national guard; his speeches in defence of the right of mass petitions, won for him a broad popularity among the revolutionary democracy.

The indignation of Robespierre was shared by Marat, an ardent, revolutionist who hated the old order and responded keenly to the needs of the broad masses of the people. A physician by education, a talented publicist, Marat devoted his pen to the service of the revolution. His paper «The Friend of the People» enjoyed broad popularity among the toilers. In this paper Marat ridiculed bitterly the eloquence of the deputies of the Constituent Assembly, who tried to cover up with flow-

ery phrases the inactivity of the bourgeoisie and its inability to solve the basic questions of the revolution.

«It has only now been recognized that all the people are, by their very nature equal and must be called to duties without any discrimination in accordance with their ability, but — as you have already added — without the payment of direct taxes amounting to one mark in silver<sup>1</sup> they cannot be the representatives of the nation, without the payment of a direct tax of ten livres, they cannot be electors; without the payment of a direct tax of three livres they cannot be active citizens. In this way by means of petty amendments you have found a skilful method of closing before us the doors of the Legislative Assembly, the courts, the directorates, municipalities. Your famous «Declaration of Rights» was only a simple bait to satisfy the fools because you were afraid of their irritation. Because in the final analysis it leads to the transference of all the privileges, of all the honours of the new order to the hands of the rich. As for us the advantages of the constitution mean leaving us in the condition of poverty and filth,» — wrote the friend of the people, Marat.



Marat.

For the suppression of the revolutionary movement the big bourgeoisie required strong power. In agreement with the landlords the bourgeoisie left the king at the head of France, endowing him with broad authority. The king appointed the ministers and general commanders, maintained the diplomatic relations with other countries, and finally had a right to veto laws adopted by the Legislative Assembly and to «prevent» them from being carried into life. The Legislative Assembly had only the right to pass laws and to distribute taxes. In this way a *constitutional* (limited) *monarchy*, which defends the interest of the big bourgeoisie and of the bourgeois, landlords was established in France.

In clearing the ground for bourgeois society the Constituent Assembly destroyed the former divisions of France into separate provinces with special tariff duties and with its varied system of measures and weights. A metric system of measure was introduced. The internal tariff barriers were destroyed; the whole of France was divided into 83 similar departments where local authorities were elected by the well-to-do section of the population — the active citizens. The court of seigneurs and the king's officials was replaced by the court of jurymen. The guilds were destroyed and the government regulation of industry was nullified. The system of taxation was also reviewed and at its basis was placed a tax on the land; moveable property was taxed much less, which again was to the advantage of the commercial, industrial and moneyed bourgeoisie.

The Constituent Assembly also carried out the *church* reform.

<sup>1</sup> About 54 francs.

The basis of the might of the catholic church was its great land possessions. In striving to destroy the influence of the catholic church as one of the bulwarks of the old feudal order, the bourgeoisie confiscated all church lands. The church lands were declared to be «national property» and the clergy itself was transferred into the position of officials — the employees receiving salaries from the state. The clergymen and the bishops were elected the same as other officials at the meeting of the active citizens and had to take the oath of allegiance to the constitution. The church reform also had a financial significance; the lands confiscated from the church were made available for sale for the purpose of covering the state debt; on these lands the government issued special paper money (assignats). The bourgeoisie and the well-to-do stratas of the peasantry had the right of purchasing plots from the former church lands.

**The Policy of  
the Bourgeoisie  
toward the  
Working Class.  
The Law of Le  
Chapelier  
(June 14, 1791).**

The bourgeois character of the policy of the Constituent Assembly was particularly sharply manifested in its relations to the workers.

During the first years of the revolution the conditions of the working class continued to remain very difficult. Due to the lack of markets the production of articles of luxury, with which many artisans earned their livelihood, was curtailed; the rich dismissed many of their servants; tailors, barbers and building workers suffered from unemployment. Fearing unrest on account of unemployment the government organized public works. In the winter of 1790—91 conditions improved somewhat. A period of slight industrial revival set in. The workers put forward demands for increased wages, which were at a very low level, and reinforced their demands by strikes. Trade union organizations began to appear. The building workers organized mutual aid societies of carpenters, the printers — the union of typographical workers. The city municipality of Paris, which was in the hands of the big bourgeoisie, rose against the workers. It was supported by the Constituent Assembly.

On June 14th, 1791, the Constituent Assembly passed a law prohibiting all trade union associations, meetings and strikes. The violators of the law were subjected to severe punishment. This law was named after the deputy who proposed it, «the Law of Le Chapellier». Shortly afterwards, a decree was published to stop all public works. Up to 20,000 workers were thrown on the streets. Thus the bourgeoisie which came into power solely through the revolutionary pressure of the toiling masses, crushed the very first struggle for the interest of the working class. The Law of Le Chapellier passed on June 14th, 1791, remained in force up to 1864.

**The Flight of  
the King.**

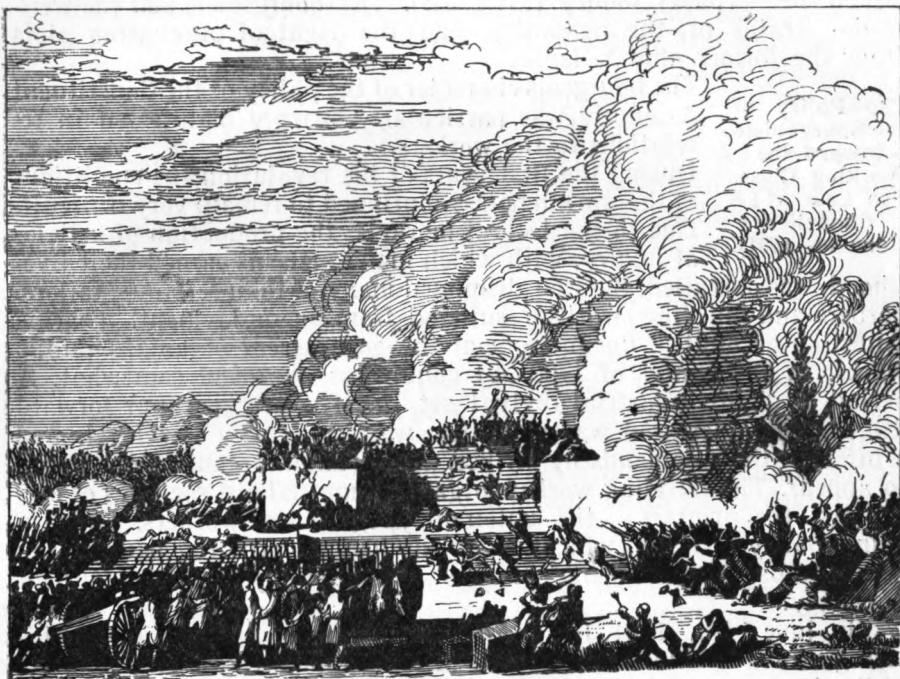
The class contradictions in the country continued to sharpen. The king and the clique of the king's court, while forced to make concessions, were secretly only-

awaiting a convenient moment in order to crush the revolution. They placed their hopes in foreign intervention and assistance from the emigré nobility. Brothers of the king, many of the nobility and even some of the bourgeois merchants fled abroad, frightened by the revolution.

The city of Coblenz, a small German city near the eastern border of France, became the centre of these counter-revolutionary emigrés. Toward the end of 1791 the group of counter-revolutionary emigrés in Coblenz reached 20,000. Here the plans for the invasion of France were made, and here were organized detachments of emigrés for a march on Paris, and ambassadors were sent to foreign courts with appeals for military and financial assistance.

The emigrés organized a plot for the king's flight abroad from where he was to lead the emigré army in a march on France. The landlords intended to restore the old order in France by the force of bayonets.

The preparations for the flight of the king went on feverishly at the court. Rumours of this spread throughout Paris. However the Con-



The massacre on the field of Mars. July 17, 1791.

stituent Assembly did not undertake in any way to interfere with the king's flight. On the night of the 20th to the 21st of June 1791 Louis the 16th with his family, secretly left Paris and started for the Austrian border, leaving a letter full of threats addressed to the Constituent Assembly. In the city of Varenne, however, not far from the French border Louis the 16th was recognized, detained and brought back to Paris under guard. The revolutionary press and clubs raised a stormy agitation against the king's power. The Jacobin club, which received its name from the monastery where its sessions were held, enjoyed at that time wide popularity in Paris. Fearing the people, and not wishing to destroy its union with the landlords the Constituent Assembly, in spite of the apparent treachery of the king, published a decree of his innocence, declaring that the king himself did not run away, but that he was «kidnapped» from Paris.

**The massacre  
on the field  
of Mars, July  
17, 1791.**

The petty bourgeoisie and artisan population of Paris answered this decree with a demonstration on July 17, 1791. The people gathered on the Mars field and demanded that the fate of Louis the 16th should be turned over for trial to the new National Assembly.

In reality this was a hidden demand for the deposition of the king. The demonstration on the Mars field was of a peaceful character. However, the Paris authorities and the bourgeois guard came on the field and dispersed the unarmed mob with fire. The Mars field was strewn with corpses.

The massacre on the Mars field created a deep gulf between the bourgeoisie and the toiling masses of Paris. At the same time it served as a mighty impulse for the growth of the republican movement.

**The Legislative  
Assembly.**

The work of the Constituent Assembly was completed. The constitution of 1791 received legal power and through it the power of the bourgeoisie was secured.

Then came the elections to the Legislative Assembly in which, as was stated above, only the active, i. e., the well-to-do, citizens took part. This predetermined the composition of the Legislative Assembly which opened its session on October 1, 1791. Out of 160 deputies it included only three peasants and four artisans. The predominant place in it was occupied by the representatives of the new bourgeoisified nobility and of the large bourgeoisie.

Already in the Legislative Assembly which began its work on October 1, 1791, was formed a political grouping which defended the interests of the commercial and industrial bourgeoisie. Its most prominent representatives were elected from the department of Gironde. Hence they were named Girondists. There were few Jacobins, the representatives of the revolutionary democracy who grouped around the Jacobin club.

The Legislative Assembly just as the Constituent Assembly defended the interests of the ruling class — the big bourgeoisie. In the struggle against the emigré nobility, who were organizing at the borders of France the cadres for the counter-revolutionary intervention, the Legislative Assembly declared the confiscation of their property and the execution of those emigrés who would not return to France within a definite time. In striving to place the church at the service of the bourgeois state, the Legislative Assembly demanded that the clergy should take an oath to the constitution and clergymen who refused to take this oath be deprived of salary. However Louis the 16th in defending the interests of «his» nobility and the clergy refused to confirm these laws, which evoked a new expression of indignation amongst the toilers.

In defending the interests of the big bourgeoisie against the forces of the old order, the Legislative Assembly did not do anything to relieve the conditions of the masses. The peasant question remained unsolved; the feudal duties which the peasantry stubbornly refused to fulfil continued to weigh on them. The discontent of the peasants was growing and was now directed not only against the seigneurs but also against the big bourgeoisie, who were sitting in the Legislative Assembly.

Alongside with the agrarian unrest a movement against the ever increasing cost of living was also growing among the city and village poor. The prices on products imported from the French colonies were rising steadily on account of the uprisings developing among the Negro slaves to whom the Constituent Assembly refused to grant freedom.



In a number of districts of France there was a shortage of bread; already in the spring of 1792 food riots began and the demand for establishing stable prices on grain was put forth.

The growing cost of living was increasing due to the fall in the value of paper money (assignat), which had to be issued in large quantities in order to cover state expenditures. Towards the middle of 1792 the value of paper money fell to 57%. Coined money had almost completely disappeared from circulation; prices on commodities were constantly rising. The bourgeoisie undertook nothing to relieve the conditions of the toiling masses. The irreconcilability of the interests of the bourgeoisie and of the broad masses was manifested ever more clearly.

#### **The Declaration of War by Austria.**

Sooner or later the encounter of the revolutionary bourgeoisie of France with the feudal landlords of Europe was inevitable. Feudal Europe, which gladly received the counter-revolutionary French emigrés, encouraged their activity in the preparation of an armed intervention in France for the restoration of the old order. The Austrian government moved its troops towards the French borders and threatened France with the convening of an armed congress of the European powers for the restoration of absolutism in France. Under such conditions the commercial-industrial bourgeoisie which dominated the Legislative Assembly decided to hasten the armed encounter.

By speeding up the events it planned to achieve a double aim. First, to strengthen its position within the country by distracting the attention of the broad toiling masses of the population from the condition of affairs in France, and, at the same time, to send to the front the «trouble makers», that is the most energetic and revolutionary section of the population. The bourgeoisie was also striving through war to strengthen the international position of France which had been weakened under the old order, to conclude new advantageous agreements with England and Austria and finally to gain something at the expense of the Rhine possessions of the German kings and to extend the territory of France to its «natural boundaries» — up to the Alps and the Rhine.

The clique at the king's court was also for war. The king and those near him hoped that as a result of the war revolutionary France would be broken up and the old order restored by the force of foreign bayonets.

But the Jacobins, the leaders of the revolutionary democracy, among them also Robespierre, understood clearly that war should not be started while the traitor king stood at the head of France, while treason nestled in the commanding staff of the army, in a word not until the revolution had squared accounts with their own enemies *within the country*. «How is it possible to carry on the war when at the head of the army stand the acknowledged counter-revolutionists? Under such conditions the war will be utilized either by the party of the king's court or by the moderates», stated Robespierre.

In the spring of 1792 the Legislative Assembly declared war against Austria. Austria was soon joined by Prussia, with whom she had already concluded an alliance.

The backward feudal countries of Europe were the enemies of revolutionary France, also before her appeared another very dangerous enemy — England, which was the foremost industrial country in the world. Two specific factors forced the English bourgeoisie to declare war on France. In the first place the industrial revolution was taking place in England, and the English bourgeoisie needed new markets for its growing industry. The English bourgeoisie understood that notwithstanding the fact that France for a long time carried on an unsuccessful

war with England for trade and industrial supremacy, yet in the event of a successful revolution in France, and the establishment of the bourgeois order, industry in France would develop, and France freed from the fetters of feudalism would become a dangerous rival for England. There was yet another factor which forced England to support the counter-revolutionary forces in France. The development of the revolution in France was also helping to develop a revolutionary mood in England itself. In 1793 the uprising of the English masses against the yoke of the English bourgeoisie was so great, that throughout England martial law was declared, and in some places the power was given to the war commanders. The growth of a revolutionary mood in its own country forced the ruling classes of England to declare war on France. In this way revolutionary France not only had to fight a hard battle against its own inside counter-revolutionary forces, but had also to struggle on the outside fronts; against the feudal forces of Europe and against the powerful bourgeois rival, England.

Thus began the struggle of bourgeois France with Europe which continued for over twenty years.

## § 8. The Overthrow of the Monarchy. The Revolution of August 10, 1792.

### The Defeats at the Front.

The very first battles exposed the sabotage and treachery which nestled in the French army. The majority of the commanding staff coming from the ranks of the nobility were adherents of the old order and secretly desired the defeat of France. The soldiers lost all confidence in their commanders and they saw a traitor in every officer and more than a traitor in every general. Discipline was undermined. The old army was disintegrating together with the old order.

At the very first encounters with the Austro-Prussian troops the French army suffered one defeat after another. The war was carried over on to the territory of France. The Austro-Prussian troops were advancing on Paris.

### The Revolutionary movement in Paris.

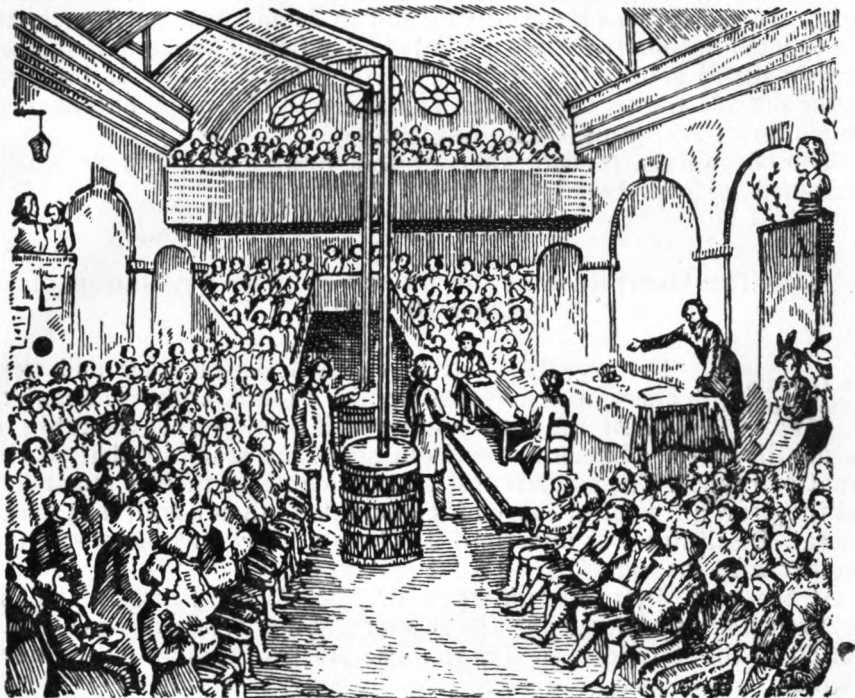
The excitement in Paris was growing. Stubborn rumours were spread that the «Austrian woman»<sup>1</sup> was reporting military secrets to the enemy. The Legislative Assembly passed a decree for the establishment of a military camp of 20,000 federal<sup>2</sup> volunteers outside the gates of Paris to protect the capital in the event of a further advance by the enemy. However, the king refused to approve this decree. The refusal of the king evoked a storm of indignation throughout the country.

<sup>1</sup> The *Austrian woman* — the French queen (Marie-Antoinette), the wife of Louis the 16<sup>th</sup> who was a sister of the Austrian emperor. A survey of the king's documents has shown that she was actually supplying the enemy with the plans of the campaign.

<sup>2</sup> The word «*federate*» originated from the holiday of the federation of the fraternal union which was organized yearly on the Mars field on July 14th, on the day of the capture of Bastille. Delegates from all departments in France came to this holiday.

On June 20, 1792, the Parisians organized a gigantic demonstration the core of which again consisted of the workers and artisan population of the Saint Antoine suburb.

However, the demonstration was led by the Girondists, the party of the commercial-industrial bourgeoisie incapable of carrying on a decisive struggle against the old order. For this reason the demonstration ended in a complete failure. The demonstrators were successful in penetrating into the palace, in compelling the king to put on a red nightcap and to proclaim a toast to the health of the nation; however they were not successful in forcing from the king an agreement on the



The meeting of the Jacobin club.

organization of an armed camp near Paris. The failure of the demonstration gave courage to the clique in the king's court. The Legislative Assembly began to receive petitions of the monarchists full of threats towards the Jacobins and their leaders. In the meantime the situation on the front was growing worse, and worse. The enemy was moving on Paris. On July 11, 1792 the Legislative Assembly declared «the fatherland is in danger». Arms were distributed to Parisians and, due to the shortage of guns, various weapons (spears, swords, etc.) were forged in all the shops of Paris. Against the will of the king a detachment of armed federals burning with the desire to defend the revolutionary capital from the counter-revolutionary intervention gathered all over the country and hastily moved towards Paris. A detachment of federals sent from Marseilles gained particular fame. They marched courageously

to Paris to the sounds of the revolutionary hymn which soon spread not only over France but also over the whole of Europe — the famous Marseillaise which was composed by Captain *Rouge de Lille*.

In this way the initiative in the defence of the country from internal and external counter-revolution was passing into the hands of the people.

#### **Revolutionary Clubs and Sections of Paris.**

The political clubs and revolutionary press of Paris carried on intensive agitation. Of particular prominence was the Jacobin club which united into its ranks the petty bourgeoisie imbued with revolutionary sentiments. It established close relations with a number of provincial clubs and represented a large agitational and organizational centre. It was in its halls that the meetings of the volunteer-federals, who flocked to Paris from all over France, took place. The leaders of the revolutionary democracy (Robespierre and Marat) were unceasingly emphasizing the treachery of the court and called the masses to revolutionary action. From the tribune of the Jacobin club Robespierre demanded the deposition of the king, the disbanding of the Legislative Assembly and the calling of a new people's Assembly — Convention which was to be elected by all the citizens without a division into the active and the passive.

«The Legislative Assembly — this is your most vicious enemy; as long as it exists it will revenge itself on you and will try to lull you to sleep with false promises... Demand the calling of the Convention which will put the king on trial and will review the constitution,» — wrote Marat in his fiery articles. Revolutionary activity was boiling in the sections of Paris<sup>1</sup>. The most active were the sections populated by the workers and artisans, — they were marching at the head of the movement. Already in July of 1792 a number of sections admitted into their ranks both the active and passive citizens and declared their sessions permanently opened. Toward the end of July the majority of the sections of Paris favoured the deposition of Louis the 16th. A central revolutionary committee, composed of the representatives of all sections, was also formed. The preparation for the uprising was concentrated in its hands.

#### **The Revolution of August 10, 1792.**

At the end of July appeared the manifesto of the Prussian commander-in-chief, Herzog of Braunschweig, in which he threatened not to leave a single stone unturned in Paris unless the former unlimited power of the king was restored in France. This was an open challenge to revolutionary Paris. On the night of August 10th tocsins rang throughout Paris. In the city hall the representatives of the Paris sections formed a revolutionary Paris Commune<sup>2</sup>, which became the centre of the uprising. This was the famous Commune of the 10th of August which gained fame by its revolutionary energy. The armed masses of Paris workers and volunteer federals who came to Paris attacked the king's palace. Up to 20,000 workers and artisans from the suburbs of Saint Antoine and Saint Marceau constituted the main core of the re-

<sup>1</sup> Paris was divided into forty-eight sections (wards, boroughs).

<sup>2</sup> *Commune*, — the organ of municipal self-government.

bels. After a bloody encounter the palace was taken. The king and his family fled for shelter to the walls of the Legislative Assembly.

The bourgeois Legislative Assembly watched the events with alarm. While the outcome of the struggle was in doubt it occupied an undecided position and accepted the king under its protection. But when victory was gained by the revolting people, the Legislative Assembly was compelled to depose the power of Louis 16th and announce the call to the Convention to try the king.

On the demand of the Paris Commune Louis the 16th was arrested and imprisoned in the Temple tower.

The Paris Commune, which was based on the workers and the petty bourgeois strata of the city population, virtually concentrated all power in its hands. The most prominent leaders of the Jacobins — Robespierre and Marat — were members of the Commune.



Danton.

The Paris Commune sent its commissars all over France announcing the current events. In Paris, proper, the Commune carried on an energetic struggle against the counter-revolution. It carried out numerous searches and arrests, closed monasteries, prohibited the publication of the monarchists' papers, reorganized the national guard and carried out the sending of a mass of volunteers to the front.

In the meantime the Prussians had already taken Longwy and besieged Verdun. The volunteers did not want to leave for the front as in the rear of the army there was the nest of the monarchists. There was the danger that the arrested counter revolutionists would come out of the jails and organize an uprising from the rear. «First punish the counter-revolutionists who are sitting in jail and then go on to the front,» — declared the volunteers. In the meantime the Legislative Assembly dragged out the trial in every possible way, arousing by this the quite natural alarm and suspicion of the revolutionary masses. On account of the criminal inactivity of the Legislative Assembly the masses took into their own hands the trial of the arrested counter-revolutionists. A spontaneous punishment was meted out to the monarchists who were sitting in jail. The attempts of the Vigilants Committee of the Paris Commune to direct this spontaneous explosion into organized channels was a failure.

The Commune was feverishly organizing a new army to resist the enemy. The revolutionary energy of the masses carried on its work.

«The whole of France is Moving, all are burning with a desire to fight,» — stated Danton, one of the Jacobins advanced to the position of the Minister of Justice, from the tribune of the Legislative Assembly.

«Let a part of the people move to the front, another will remain here digging the trenches, the third with spears in their hands will defend our cities. We demand capital punishment for those who refuse to march on the enemy or give up the arms in their possession. Decisive measures are necessary; when the fatherland is in danger, — no one has a right to refuse to serve it without the risk of covering himself with disgrace and earning the name of a traitor of the country... The tocsin which is ready to sound will ring not with signal of alarm but with a signal calling for an attack on our enemies. In order to defeat them we must have audacity, and once more audacity, and then France will be saved!» — stated Danton. This militant slogan was taken up by entire France.

And finally on September 20, 1792 the French army gained a victory over the Prussians in the battle of Valmy, and Paris was saved from the direct threat of the counter-revolutionary invasion.

The victory of Valmy still further inspired the French soldiers and imbued them with confidence in their own power. Shortly afterwards the French troops not only repulsed the army of the Prussians and the Austrians but even occupied the whole of Belgium.

## § 9. On the Road to the Revolutionary Dictatorship.

### The Calling of the Convention.

The revolution of August 10th, 1792 indicated the shifting of influence to the city petty bourgeoisie, to the workers and peasants. Election to the Convention already proceeded without a division into the active and passive citizens. Almost the entire male population of France took part in this election. However, the French workers and the poor peasants of that time did not yet realize sufficiently their class interests. They did not have their own special party which could lead their struggle. On account of this, there were only two workers out of 750 deputies.

It was not in vain that on the very first of its convocation the Convention, while proclaiming a republic in France, adopted a decree proposed by Danton that «all property — personal, land and industrial — be preserved forever».

### The Struggle of the Girondists and the Moun- tain.

From the very first day of the Convention a severe struggle was going on between the representatives of the big commercial-industrial bourgeoisie and the defenders of the interests of the democratic masses, the petty bourgeoisie, peasantry, etc. The representatives of the commercial-industrial bourgeoisie, who were mainly supported by the southwestern departments of France, the *Girondists* constituted the right grouping of the Convention. In the first period of the activity of the Convention they were able to take both the power and the influence into their hands.

As adherents of the freedom of capitalist enterprise and exploitation the Girondists were the enemies of the old order. Already in the Legislative Assembly there began a struggle with the party of the court, but they did not carry on this struggle consistently. Jointly with the other members of the Convention they voted for the establishment of a republic in France, only, however after the masses overthrew the king and established the republic as a practical reality. However on coming to power and taking into their hands the ministerial posts, the Girondists considered the revolution completed. In their opinion the time had come to reap the fruits of the victory for the purpose of unhindered speculation and profit. The revolutionary Paris Commune which was based on the worker-artisan population of the capital and had the sympathy of the wide masses of the peasantry, inspired the Girondists with serious fear.

The left group of the Convention was represented by the *Jacobins* or the party of the *Mountain*. The group was so-called because its mem-



bers occupied the upper benches of the Convention <sup>1</sup>. The Jacobins defended the interests of the democratic masses and considered the revolution by no means completed. And in reality the basic questions advanced by the revolution still remained unsolved. The yoke of feudal duties still lay over the peasants and they continued to insist on their abolition without any compensation. The worker population of the cities could not remain content until its position was relieved. By means of unceasing petitions, armed demonstrations, and at times also with direct revolts they actively supported the Jacobins, compelling the wavering majority of the Convention (the so-called «marsh» supporting either Girondists or Jacobins depending on whose side the power was) to withdraw now and then the support from the Girondists and give their votes to the Jacobins.

The struggle between the Mountaineers and the Girondists, between the representatives of the democratic masses and the bourgeoisie, proceeded along a number of basic questions.

**The Execution  
of the King  
(January 21,  
1793).**

Among these the first was the *question of the fate of Louis the 16th*. The Jacobins insisted on the speediest trial and execution of Louis the 16th. They viewed this as a means of putting an end once and for all to the attempts of the monarchists to restore the power of the king. At the same time the Girondists, fearing the further development of the revolution and new activities of the masses, were delaying the trial in every possible way and as a matter of fact were attempting to save the king.

As a result of the active interference of the Paris Commune and of the Parisian sections which were constantly sending their delegations to the gates of the Convention, the Jacobins gained the victory. The king was tried, found guilty, and was executed on January 21st, 1793.

**The Question of  
Food Supplies.**

A severe struggle was carried on between the Mountaineers and the Girondists around the *question of food supplies*. The harvest of 1792 was very poor. Already in the summer and the fall of 1792, riots took place in a number of districts on account of the shortage of food. The situation sharpened still further in the winter of 1792-1793.

With the successes of the French troops (who occupied Belgium and Holland) England began to show an open animosity towards France. A special bill prohibited the export of grain to France. In retaliation for this, the Girondist ministry hastened to annul the commercial agreement of 1786 which was very hateful to the French bourgeoisie. The execution of the king was seized upon by the English bourgeoisie as a convenient pretext for breaking relations. In February 1793 England joined the Austro-Prussian coalition.

The English fleet bombarded the harbours of France, undermining its over-sea trade. The prices on colonial products — sugar, coffee, etc. — in France rose very high.

The carrying on of the war demanded great expenditures. The French government covered them with ever new issues of paper

<sup>1</sup> The hall of the Convention was built as an amphitheatre; the Jacobins occupied the upper benches and were therefore nicknamed «mountaineers», the «inhabitants of the mountains».

money the value of which was steadily falling. The army required great supplies of foodstuffs. At the same time the sown area decreased due to the fact that a considerable section of the adult male population went to war. In addition to that, the peasants did not readily sell their bread for paper money and demanded payment in gold or silver coin. Supplies in the cities were blocked considerably. Big lines stood at food shops. The workers suffered the most from the high cost of living. A pound of bread cost eight sous<sup>1</sup> and the wages did not exceed 30-35 sous. A worker's family had to spend the greater part of its income for the buying of bread alone. Frequently mobs broke into bread shops and bakeries demanding the sale of bread at stable prices.

A struggle for the «Maximum», that is for the establishment of the maximum prices beyond which products could not be sold, was carried on with particular energy in Paris and in a number of other large cities in France.

Beginning with the fall of 1792 numerous deputations of the Paris Commune club and sections demanded from the Convention the establishment of a price limit on bread.

The Girondists met these petitions with undisguised hatred. The defenders of the interests of the commercial-industrial bourgeoisie who went speculating on the high prices, opposed any kind of state interference limiting the freedom of trade, manufacturing and speculative activity of private persons. The Girondists defended the full freedom of bread trade, i. e. the full freedom of speculating at the expense of the hungry. Instead of assisting the masses they threw accusations against them. «The disorganizers are those who wish to equalize property and wealth, to establish prices on food productions, who want the worker to receive as much as the legislator», — wrote the leader of the Girondists, Brissot.

At first the Jacobins wavered, because for many of the merchants, the owners of small shops, and for the peasant selling his surplus of grain, the establishment of stable prices was not profitable. Robespierre, the leader of the Jacobins, while not defending the maximum price, proposed to undertake only energetic measures to curb the speculation in bread. The wavering of the Jacobins permitted the Girondists to score a victory. In December 1792 the Convention passed a law allowing the full freedom of grain trade and only prohibited the export of grain abroad.

This decree evoked the indignation of the Paris poor. It was clear that there could be no thought of satisfying its demands while the majority of the Convention was following the Girondists. The city poor now saw in the Girondists the defenders of speculation, the people responsible for hunger, and demanded their expulsion from the Convention.

The «madmen», — as the bourgeoisie mockingly called the extreme revolutionists who put to the forefront the question of satisfying the economic needs and requirements of the city poor — began to enjoy great popularity among the masses of the Paris population.

The advent of  
the «madmen».

<sup>1</sup> Livre is equal in value to one franc. One livre has twenty sous.

The «madmen» did not have their representatives in the Convention itself; they carried on their agitation in the sections of Paris. The leaders of the «madmen» enjoyed the greatest influence in the sections among the worker-artisan population. In the winter and the summer of 1793 Jacques Roux, a former Paris parish clergyman, and a young revolutionist Varlet, the leaders of the «madmen», viciously attacked the merchants and rich men and sharply attacked the members of the Convention, stating that they had done nothing to relieve the needs of the people.

«Freedom is an empty mirage, as long as one class can with impunity starve another class. Equality is an empty mirage as long as a rich man, thanks to his monopolies, enjoys the right of life and death over those near him. The republic is also an empty mirage while the counter-revolution is working from day to day establishing such prices on products that three fourths of the citizens cannot afford them without shedding tears... Is the property of the scoundrels more valuable than human life?» asked Jacques Roux appearing on behalf of the delegation at the gates of the Convention.

In criticizing bourgeois freedom and equality, which still gave no relief from their needs to the poor, Jacques Roux and other leaders of the «madmen» however did not put forth a programme of radical economic reconstruction. They only demanded a relentless struggle against the merchants and speculators and they came out sharply against the rich merchants. And it could not be expected that in that epoch when the working class had as yet not become conscious of its class aims and the roads leading toward them, when the bourgeois order was only breaking up the feudal rule, that in that epoch a complete communist programme of social reconstruction should be put forward.

**The Defeat of  
the Front and  
the Uprising in  
Vendée.**

In the meantime, the general condition of affairs was growing ever sharper. The French army which declared «peace to the cottages and war to the palaces» encountered a powerful union of the feudal states of continental Europe, at the head of which stood bourgeois England who did not want to permit the supremacy of France. The revolutionary offensive in the fall of 1792 threw back the enemy army far beyond the borders of France. However, the reorganization of the French army was far from being completed. It is true that part of the commanding staff was replaced by revolutionary officers who came from the ranks of the third estate. However the discipline was far from being reestablished. The generals and officers did not coordinate their activities, the soldiers suffered from a shortage of footwear, clothing and ammunition and for this reason desertion was a frequent occurrence.

The troops of the enemy, well fed, well armed and well trained again began to score one victory after another. In the spring of 1793 the French had to clear out of Belgium. In addition to that the French commander-in-chief, General Dumourier, went over on the side of the enemy. The treachery of General Dumourier, who was closely connected with the Girondists, evoked an explosion of indignation in Paris.

On account of the counter-revolutionary movement which began in Vendée<sup>1</sup>, the situation became threatening. The rich strata of the peasantry of Vendée, were already dissatisfied by the declaration of war and the taxation of food products which was beginning to be carried on in some places. The counter-revolutionary agitation of the priests and the landlords and the support from England brought the logical results. A peasant uprising flared up in Vendée under the slogan of defence of king and religion. Under such strained condition of civil and external war it was necessary to have the consolidation of all the revolutionary forces and an energetic struggle against the enemies of the revolution, both in France itself, as well as on its borders. In this period the Jacobins entered into an alliance with the «madmen» and together with them led the general democratic revolutionary storm of the petty bourgeoisie, workers and peasants. On May 4th, 1793 under the pressure of the revolutionary masses, in spite of the opposition of the Girondists, the maximum (limited) price on bread was established, a compulsory loan from the rich was carried out and a progressive income tax was established. The recruitment for struggle against Vendée was being carried on and the rich were prohibited from paying money in place of serving in the army. A *supreme revolutionary tribunal* was created for the struggle against counter-revolution. A guillotine<sup>2</sup> was erected on the square of the revolution.

**The Revolution  
of May 31st-  
June 2nd, 1793.**

The Girondists stubbornly resisted the attacks of the masses on the well-to-do bourgeoisie which had the aim of crushing the resistance of the bourgeoisie to the further development of the revolution. While still enjoying the support of the wavering «marsh», the Girondists created a special Commission of 12 for the struggle against the revolutionary movement; they put on trial before the revolutionary tribunal Marat, the friend of the people, and arrested some of the leaders of the «madmen» as well as some of the leaders of the Paris Commune. Simultaneously with this the Girondists attempted to rouse the provincial departments against Paris, i. e. the Girondists were entering on the path of civil war. Under their leadership an uprising began in Lyons, a centre of the French silk industry. Leaders of the Lyons «madmen» and Jacobins perished on the guillotine. The bourgeoisie of Toulon, Bordeaux, and Marseilles were to send armed detachments into Paris for the defence of the Girondists. The Girondist leaders threatened to wipe revolutionary Paris off the face of the earth. The counter-revolutionary uprising in Vendée was extending and growing stronger, securing additional forces in the resistance of the Girondists to the offensive of the revolutionary masses. The flame of civil war blazed over France surrounded by enemies. A decisive encounter between the Mountain and Girondists, between the revolutionary democracy and the big bourgeoisie was becoming inevitable.

«The people are tired... Save them or they will save themselves», — with these threatening words the delegation of the Paris Commune

<sup>1</sup> A district in the western part of France along the shores of the river Luara.

<sup>2</sup> A machine which chopped off with one stroke of the knife the heads of the condemned. It was called guillotine after the name of its inventor, the physician Guillotin.

addressed itself to the Convention. The driving of the Girondists out of the Convention and the establishment of the «general maximum» stable prices of all the articles of daily necessity, — these slogans of the «madmen» were widely taken up by the masses. As in the days of the revolution of August 10th a Committee of Uprising was again created in Paris; and the «madmen» played a prominent rôle.

On May 31st, 1793, the alarm again sounded throughout Paris. The armed sections of Paris surrounded the Convention demanding the destruction of the Girondist Commission of 12 and the driving out of the Girondists from the Convention. Frightened by the uprising, the Convention immediately destroyed the Commission of 12 but refused to drive the Girondists out of its ranks. Then on the night of the first to the second of June some of the prominent leaders of the Girondists were arrested and an order was given prohibiting the Girondist newspapers. On June 2, 1793, the building of the Convention was again surrounded by armed sections of Paris. The Committee of Uprising issued an order «to surround the Convention with armed forces in order that the leaders of the conspiracy could be arrested during the day in the event that the Convention refuse to satisfy the just demands of the Parisian citizens.»

The attempts of the members of the Convention to leave the building surrounded by armed sections was unsuccessful; everywhere they were met by bayonets. «Cannoneers! To arms!» commanded the commander of the Parisian section at the attempt of the members of the Convention to break through the armed ring which surrounded them. The Convention was compelled to submit and issued a decree on the arrests of the Girondists.

The Girondists were turned over to the revolutionary tribunal and guillotined in the fall of 1793.

*As a result of the revolution of May 31st and June 2nd, 1793, the power was torn away from the hands of the big commercial-industrial bourgeoisie — the Girondists — and came into the hands of the revolutionary democracy — the city petty bourgeoisie, workers and peasants.*

The commercial-industrial bourgeoisie was not only unable to solve the tasks put by the revolution, but it became a hindrance to its development, in reality, it became counter-revolutionary in initiating a civil war against the revolutionary masses in a country which was surrounded by enemies.

The city poor continued to suffer from the shortage of food. The peasants continued to revolt, insisting on the annulment of all feudal duties without compensation and refusing categorically to carry out these duties.

Nor could the commercial-industrial bourgeoisie cope with the task of defending the country. The reorganization of the army was carried on without sufficient energy and the French troops suffered defeat. In this way the big bourgeoisie was found to be unable to carry to the end the bourgeois revolution, to defend it from the blows from within as well as from without. «Only the interference of the peasantry and the proletariat, the «plebeian elements of the cities» was capable of seriously driving ahead the bourgeois revolution» (Lenin).

After the revolution of May 31st — June 2nd, 1793, came the period of the *revolutionary-democratic dictatorship* of the petty bourgeoisie which based itself on the broadest lower strata of the population.

## § 10. The Dictatorship of the Jacobins

In coming to power the Jacobins had to solve the tasks of the bourgeois revolution which the big bourgeoisie was incapable of solving. The conditions under which they had to act were exceedingly difficult. In the summer and the fall of 1793, when the power came into their hands, the French republic was on the verge of destruction.

The Girondists had openly gone over to the side of the counter-revolution. Many of them fled from Paris and organized counter-revolutionary uprisings in the southern and western districts where they had firm ties with the local bourgeoisie. The adherents of the king now also joined with the Girondists. Bordeaux, Lyons, Marseilles and other commercial-industrial cities of France declared themselves independent from Paris. Toulon, the most important French harbour on the Mediterranean, was purposely surrendered to the British. A flame of civil war raged in France. There were times when out of eighty-three districts only twenty three remained true to the Convention. In Paris also there were nests of counterrevolution.

In the ministerial and government offices, in spite of repeated purgings, there swarmed secret enemies of the revolution. «They had revolution on their tongue, but counter-revolution in their hearts.» The former nobility, priests whose interests suffered during the revolution were consciously disguising themselves with a mask of patriotism and penetrating into the state apparatus in order to be able more successfully to harm the cause of the revolution. The foreign governments in their turn poured gold lavishly for the support of espionage, wrecking and counter-revolutionary plots. In the beginning of July 1793 Charlotte Corday, a noblewoman, who was close to the Girondists, stabbed Marat with a dagger.

In July 1793, the Committee of Public Safety received the captured documents of an English spy with information about large sums of money expended on the organization of wrecking, about money paid to spies who were receiving regular wages. A special instruction was found about the preparation of phosphorus fuses to be used in the burning of arsenals and food warehouses. In fact, in the summer of 1793, fires broke out in the shell factory of Bayonne and in the artillery park of Chamille which caused great damage. Treachery and wrecking were also hiding in the commanding staff of the French army. The treachery of General Dumourier, Custine and others placed the French army in an exceedingly difficult position. The arsenals, purposely neglected by the government of Louis the 16th were empty. There was a shortage of ammunition, equipment and of food.

The outside enemy surrounded France on sea and land. It seemed that a few more decisive blows — and the revolution would perish.

**The Revolutionary Government. The Constitution of 1793.** To save the republic the Jacobins had to undertake the most energetic and decisive measures. A few days after the expulsion of the Girondists, they had already worked out a republican constitution for France.

The Jacobin constitution of 1793 established electoral rights for the entire adult male population of the country, a Legislative Assembly re-elected annually, the election of local authorities. The most important laws had to be submitted for approval to the people themselves; the 21st article of the Constitution established that the government is obliged to give work or means of



existence to all needy citizens. In contrast to the constitution of 1791 which granted political rights only to the property owners, the Jacobin constitution provided that every right of private property is the inviolable right of every citizen. In this way the constitution of 1793 being the most democratic constitution of that time was still a bourgeois constitution based upon the principle of private property.

The Constitution of 1793 could not be applied in the conditions in which the French republic was at that time. The struggle against external and internal counter-revolution demanded extraordinary measures, demanded the concentration of power in the hands of the revolutionary organs. This was well understood by the Jacobins.

«The task of the Constitutional government consists in preserving the republic; the task of the revolutionary government consists in its establishment», stated the leader of the Jacobins, Robespierre. «Revolution — that is war of freedom against its enemies.» The revolutionary government must show the greatest energy just because it is in a condition of war. The strict stereotyped rules are not suitable for it just because the circumstances under which it acts are threatening and changeable and particularly because it is constantly compelled to seek new and rapid means against the newly arising and pressing dangers... The revolutionary government must favour all good citizens but for the enemies of the people it has only — death.»

In the epoch of the revolutionary dictatorship of the Jacobins the entire power was concentrated in the hands of the Committee of Public Welfare and Public Safety. Both were elected from the ranks of the Convention and had to account before it for their activity. In the hands of the Committee of Public Welfare was concentrated the leadership of the entire foreign and internal policy of the republic. To it were subordinated all the local authorities, all the generals of the French army, all the diplomatic agents.

The struggle against speculation and counter-revolution was concentrated in the hands of the Committee of Safety.

Contact with various departments was realized through individual members of the Convention (Commissars) who were sent to all parts of the republic and who were also subordinated to the Committee of Public Safety.

These Commissars of the Convention directed the purging of the local authorities, carried out recruitment into the army, imposed requisition on supplies for the armies and the cities, imposed compulsory loans on the rich, introduced revolutionary taxes, carried on work in the national societies. All of this gigantic work they could fulfil only by basing themselves on the local revolutionary organizations. The whole of France was covered with a network of national societies, clubs, and committees. It was just through them that the close contact of the revolutionary government with the masses was realized. And it was just these revolutionary societies that were promoting the revolutionary measures of the Jacobin government and served locally as the «true guardians and sentinels of the revolution.»

The Jacobin club in Paris was the leading centre of these national societies and revolutionary clubs, scattered all over France. All the local societies maintained a close connection with it, received from it instructions and directions and in turn sent to it the minutes of their sessions. The significance of the Jacobin club was very great. At its

sessions were discussed the most important questions of current policy and from its ranks were advanced the responsible political leaders.

**Revolutionary terror.** For the struggle against the counter-revolution within the country, the Jacobins issued a number of terrorist decrees directed against the nobility, emigrés, forestallers, counter-revolutionary clergymen and other enemies of the revolution.

In the fall of 1793 the Paris Commune and the Jacobin club, being under the fresh impression of the news of the surrender of Toulon to the English, demanded from the Convention «*To place terror on the order of the day.*» The buying up of food supplies was declared a criminal offense and the forestallers were sent to the guillotine. Clergymen who refused to take an oath to the constitution were exiled to distant colonies. The emigré nobility who were returning secretly were threatened with capital punishment. A special decree about the «suspicious» included «those who by their conduct or their connection or by their speeches or writings have shown themselves the adherents of the tyranny and the enemies of freedom.» The counter-revolutionary uprisings in Lyons and other cities were severely suppressed. Lyons was destroyed and renamed «Liberated Commune». In its place the Convention erected a column with a short inscription: «Lyons rebelled against freedom — Lyons is no more.»

In December of 1793 Toulon was again taken by the republican troops. Among the commanding staff particular prominence was gained by a young officer Napoleon Bonaparte.

The Committee of Public Safety dispatched troops to Vendée for the suppression of the revolt. Towards the spring of 1794 it began to subside. Special detachments of the «revolutionary army» were organized from the ranks of the Paris poor and were sent into the districts for the suppression of the counter-revolutionary uprisings and to provide the capital with food.

The Jacobin terror bore a distinctly expressed class character and was directed for the defence and the strengthening of the republic.

«The entire French terrorism», — wrote Marx, — «was nothing else but a plebeian method of dealing with the enemies of the bourgeoisie — with absolutism, feudalism, landlordism.»

This was «a real, people's terror which truly rejuvenated the whole country, and by which the great French revolution became famous» (Lenin). Engels praised the Jacobins — «the people with iron energy who were successful in achieving a situation where from May 31st, 1793 to July 26th, 1794, not a single coward, not a single dealer, not a single speculator — in a word not a single bourgeois dared to appear in broad daylight» (Engels).

**The reorganization of the Army.** The Jacobins energetically carried out also the reorganization of the army. In the fall of 1793 a mass mobilization was declared throughout the entire republic.

«All Frenchmen are called for permanent duty in the army,» — stated the decree of the Convention. «The youth will go to fight; the married people will forge arms and bring up supplies; the women will prepare tents and clothing and will serve in the hospitals; the children

will pick lint; the old men will be brought to the squares in order that they should arouse the courage of the warriors and inspire hatred towards the kings.»

In the spring of 1794 the army contained 800,000 men which was a great number for those times.

The old standing armies were united with the volunteer detachments by the Convention, and the entire commanding staff was renewed.

In place of the officers from the nobility, new commanders were placed — partially according to seniority in service, partially through elections, and partially through appointment by the Convention. Now the road to promotion was open to every soldier. And indeed very shortly were developed talented and energetic commanders from the ranks of the people.

The new commanders lived in the same manner as the soldiers and shared with them all the difficulties of the campaigns. The entire army represented one single whole and submitted to strict discipline. The generals submitted unconditionally to the orders of the Committee of Public Safety. The Convention sent into each army a commissar with unlimited authority. In addition to the supervision of military affairs the commissars were also charged with the direction of the political education of the army. The army was supplied with newspapers, journals, proclamations of the Jacobin club and the decrees of the Convention. In the army clubs discussions were conducted on political questions. The army became a conscious support of the revolutionary government.

«The oppressed classes were engulfed in unlimited revolutionary enthusiasm; the war was considered by all as a just defensive war and in reality it was such a one. Revolutionary France was defending itself from reactionary monarchistic Europe.» (*Lenin*).

The French republic received a slight breathing spell due to friction in the camp of the enemy. Every one of them was afraid, in the event of their common victory over France, of the excessive strengthening of its ally. The contradictions between Prussia and Austria were particularly sharpened, when in 1793 Prussia carried out a second division of Poland between itself and Russia without the participation of Austria.

The disagreement in the ranks of the enemy, the strengthening of the army, the strengthening of its fighting capacity and consciousness gave the possibility of going over to an offensive. Towards the end of 1793 the troops of the allies were thrown off from the borders of the republic.

Thus the task of the defence of the country was also successfully carried out by the Jacobins.

The Jacobins were carrying out a social economic policy, which decisively liquidated all the remnants of feudalism. Immediately after the seizure of power the Jacobins undertook the solution of those basic

tasks of the bourgeois revolution which were raised already in the epoch of the States General but which remained unsolved during the entire period of the domination of the big bourgeoisie.

In the very first month of their dictatorship (July 17th, 1793) the Jacobins issued a decree about the complete abolition of all feudal du-

*ties without any compensation.* At the same time the Convention gave orders to burn all the feudal documents in order to avoid their restoration. The agricultural communes received back all the lands which previously were seized from them by the seigneurs. Citizens who had no land received the right to purchase on favorable conditions small plots of land from the land possessions of the emigrés, which were declared the property of the republic. (Decree of June 3rd and of September 13th, 1793). And finally the Convention permitted the peasants to divide the common land if the village so desired, and in such a way that every one of its inhabitants should receive an equal share.

*Thus was carried out the full liquidation of the feudal order in the village. By this the basic demand of the French peasant was satisfied.*

The revolutionary government also passed a number of measures to relieve the conditions of the city poor. In its interest was carried out a decree regarding the payment of forty sous for attendance at the sessions of the sections and measures were taken for the organization of social insurance. Pensions were established for old men, social insurance was also provided for large families and poor citizens. An old demand of the lower sections of the population was also carried out: *in the fall of 1793 was established the general maximum, i. e. fixed (stable) prices on all articles of daily necessity.* The violators of the maximum decree were threatened with severe punishment — up to capital punishment. Those who refused to accept paper money at its nominal price were sent to the guillotine. However, alongside with the establishment of fixed prices on products, the Jacobins also established limited rates of wages.

#### **The Struggle Against the Church.**

The counter-revolutionary activity of the clergymen who refused to take the oath swearing their allegiance to the constitution compelled the Convention to adopt severe measures towards them. The mass of the people in the city was imbued with hatred toward the catholic church and the clergy who were found to be closely connected with the counter-revolution. The struggle against the church and the catholic religion began. Believing in the coming triumph of reason, the city petty bourgeoisie wanted to place «the cult of reason» and «the cult of the supreme being» in place of antiquated christianity. The churches and cathedrals were transformed into the «temples of reason»; the pulpits were erected there for revolutionary propaganda. The bells were melted into cannons; and from the church plates money was coined.

Many of the bishops and clergymen were resigning their ranks and renouncing their religious beliefs. Instead of church holidays official revolutionary holidays were organized. The custom of civil weddings, civil baptizing and civil funerals spread widely. In the winter of 1793, the former calendar was replaced by the new «republican calendar» for the purpose of struggle against fanaticism and superstitions. The names of the twelve months were given in accordance with the time of the year. Thus, for instance, a fall month was *Brumaire* — the month of the fogs; a winter month — *Nivose* — the month of snow; spring — *Germinal* — the month of the seed growing; *Prairial* — the month of the pastures; one of the summer months was called *Thermidor* — the month of the heat, etc. However, in the struggle against the church the petty bourgeoisie showed its half-heartedness. It was not a matter of carrying the struggle against the religious poison in general, but only the replacing of the catholic church by a new state cult.

The Convention gave serious attention to the matter of national education. It wanted to organize general and free education, to create schools free from the priests and church influence. Great attention was paid to the exact sciences. At that time a standard system of metric measures was introduced in France and soon it spread throughout Europe. However, due to the shortage of time, and on account of the exceedingly strained environment, a number of projects in the sphere of national education remained unfulfilled.

The Jacobins consolidated around themselves the broad masses of the people by their energetic dealing with the enemies of the revolution, and by a determined social-economic policy in the interests of the toilers.

The Jacobins were successful in arousing throughout the country that outburst of revolutionary enthusiasm which was an essential factor in saving the republic.

*However the social-economic policy of the Jacobin government remained of a petty bourgeois character.*

In carrying on the struggle against the nobility and the owners of large property who went into the camp of counter-revolution, the Jacobins nevertheless never intended to destroy private property. Thus, for instance, in taking the lands away from the church and from the emigré nobility, the Jacobins did not intend to confiscate the lands of all the landlords and to declare all the land the property of the state. Much less did they think of transferring the industrial enterprises into the hands of the state; these enterprises, continued to remain in the hands of private owners.

In general the social conditions of the 18th century in France made the question of expropriation of industrial enterprises impossible for the following reasons: firstly — industry scattered and split up was based on hand labour of artisans; secondly — the working class was not yet conscious of its aims nor its means of achievement; lastly it, the working class, did not have its own proletarian party to lead it. In France in the 18th century there was neither a basis for socialism nor a sufficiently class conscious working class which could, under the leadership of its party, carry out a proletarian socialist revolution.

The historical merits of the Jacobins consisted in the fact that they tore out by the roots and liquidated the feudal order in France.

«The truly revolutionary treatment of outlived feudalism, the transition of the entire country towards a higher means of production, towards free peasants, households and that with a rapidity, determination, energy, unflinching devotion of a truly revolutionary democratic character — such are the material, economic conditions which saved France with «miraculous» rapidity, giving it a new birth, rejuvenating its economic basis». (Lenin).

## **§ 11. The Counter-revolutionary Uprising on the 9th of Thermidor (July 27th, 1794) and the Transference of Power into the Hands of the big Bourgeoisie.**

**The Petty Bourgeoisie Essence of the Jacobin Government.**

The position of the Jacobins, due to the successes which it had achieved, seemed firm and stable. However, in reality it was far from being so. The petty bourgeoisie is not a class which is capable of carrying on an independent line. Involuntarily and inevitably, it either gravitates towards the bourgeoisie or towards the proletariat. The very

same capitalism, for the unhindered development of which the feudal tenets were destroyed in France, was inevitably bringing out and hastening the differentiation in the ranks of the petty bourgeoisie.

Individual small strata of the petty bourgeoisie were getting rich and going over into the ranks of the big bourgeoisie; the others were bankrupted and were coming closer to the city poor. This inevitable differentiation of the petty bourgeoisie under capitalism made the class support of the revolutionary government weak and wavering. Under such conditions the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the Jacobins could not be of long duration. Either the bourgeois revolution in France had to grow over into a proletarian, and in place of the democratic dictatorship of Jacobins come to the socialist dictatorship of the proletariat (but in France of the 18th century there were neither the objective, nor the subjective pre-requisites for such a revolution) or the power had inevitably to pass from the hands of the petty bourgeoisie into the hands of the big bourgeoisie. The wavering policy of the petty bourgeoisie — the inevitable consequences of the class nature of the Jacobins — subjected the revolutionary dictatorship to a serious danger with the very first attack of the enemy forces. And these forces were constantly growing. The merciless and unswerving revolutionary fervour of the Jacobins who produced an example of true revolution was drawing its strength from the illusion that while retaining the basis of private property, they were nevertheless fighting for real freedom, for real equality. They sincerely believed that with their victory «the sun had risen for the first time, that the kingdom of reason had come and that bigotry and injustice, privileges and oppression will give place to eternal truth, eternal justice, eternal equality and the inviolable rights of men» (*Engels*). Having cleared the road for the further development of bourgeois society they sincerely believed that they had freed humanity from slavery, exploitation and oppression. This illusion gave them their strength and at the same time it also reflected their great weakness.

In uprooting feudalism in France, the petty bourgeois revolutionists cleared the way for the bourgeois society, the interests of which they served, although they themselves were not conscious of it, disguising themselves with words about freedom, equality and fraternity. But the economy of a capitalist society established by them is such «that the ruling power can either be capital or the proletariat which is overthrowing it. There are no other forces in the economics of this society» (*Lenin*). And as a matter of fact, the peasantry — particularly its well-to-do sections, had already received from the revolution the satisfaction of their basic requirements. The feudal duties, together with the church tithe were destroyed; taxes had been decreased; through the division of the common land and the purchase of plots of land from the fund of «national property» the upper strata and even the middle layers of the French peasantry had increased considerably their land possessions. These sections of the peasantry wanted rest and the possibility to utilize in their interest that which had been gained thanks to the revolution.

The situation of the village poor, of those who had little land or were entirely landless, on the other hand, continued to remain very



difficult. Having freed themselves from the feudal yoke, they were falling into the clutches of the rich peasants. Their own bread was not sufficient, they could not plan on the land purchased from the national fund. As a result of this among the village poor, before whose eyes went on the buying of national property, rumours grew rampant about an «agrarian law», i. e., the general and equal re-division of the entire land, or at least of land from the funds of the «national property». These «levelling» plans, of course, frightened the rich peasants of the village who were eager for a strong government capable of bridling the village poor. At the same time, the well-to-do peasantry, which hated the law of maximum price depriving them of profits from the sale of bread at the speculative market prices, was ready to tolerate the requisition of products at stable prices only as long as the attacks of the internal and external enemy, behind whom stood the emigré landlords, were not repulsed.

The victories gained by the Jacobins at the front and within the country gave the peasant property owners the possibility to express openly their dissatisfaction. The Jacobins could no longer count on the further support of the basic mass of the propertied peasantry without sharply changing their policy in their favour.

Alongside of this, the Jacobins were unable to create for themselves the basis of support in the village on the part of the village poor. Talks about the «agrarian law» (the re-division of the land) met on the part of the Jacobins a strong resistance as an attempt to encroach on their private property. «Economic equality is a chimera»<sup>1</sup>, stated Robespierre, the leader of the Jacobins. It is «absolutely impossible in a civil society». «The agrarian law — is a phantom invented by rogues to frighten imbeciles.»

In the spring of 1793 the Convention passed a special decree threatening the death punishment to anyone proposing «the agrarian law». The Jacobins were not giving support to the village poor nor did they take into account the changes in the sentiments of the well-to-do section of the population. Under such conditions the French village threatened to cease to be a basis of support for the revolutionary government.

The workers also began to experience disappointment in the policy of the Jacobins. It is true that the Law of Maximum, passed under the pressure of the toilers, temporarily helped to organize the supply of the army and somewhat relieved the conditions of the workers-artisan population of the city. The Law of Maximum only interfered in the sphere of *distribution* of products and did not, in any way, raise the question of their production. *And to the extent that the production and food supplies remained, not in the hands of the state but in the hands of petty private owners, to that extent the Law of Maximum could not radically solve the problem of food.* The petty owners were evermore stubbornly refusing, in spite of the threatening decrees of the Convention, to supply products at stable prices.

At the same time the Convention could neither base itself on large nationalized industry, nor on socialist enterprises in the agricultural economy (of which there were not and could not be any at that time).

<sup>1</sup> *Chi mera* an absurd and groundless fancy.

The entire production of all the spheres of the national economy of France continued to remain in the hands of the bourgeoisie and of the small bosses, the petty private owners. And, finally, the carrying out of the Law of Maximum depended upon the local authorities who to a considerable degree, consisted of persons who were far from interested in the strict carrying out of the Maximum: the bourgeoisie, petty merchants, owners of small shops, etc.

The conditions of the workers were also worsened by the fact that in addition to the stable prices on commodities, the revolutionary government had also established in September 1793 *limited rates of wages*. It is true that the wages of the workers were increased by one and a half times in comparison with the rates of 1790. But at the same time the products on the open market went up during the same period tens of times, and the course of paper money fell by half, while the revolutionary government was not in a position to organize the supply of products at stable prices. In addition to that unions and organizations of the workers were still prohibited and the law of Le Chapelier remained in force. All of this roused disappointment among the workers and the city poor who did not see any perspective for the improvement of their position.

The petty bourgeois revolutionists, supporting the revolutionary dictatorship did not understand where the forces inimical to them were, and where were those forces upon which they could rely in order to maintain their power. «The French Convention boasted of big undertakings, but did not have sufficient support for carrying them out, it did not even know from which class it must receive support for carrying out that or another measure» (*Lenin*). The Jacobins starting out from the utopia of super-class equality, of super-class freedom, were not able and could not take into account those changes in the sentiments and interests of the various classes and groups which were growing stronger, the more rapidly the process of destruction of feudalism and the establishment of bourgeois society was being completed.

The liquidation on the whole of the civil war within the country, the elimination of the immediate threats of intervention by the enemy from without facilitated the strengthening of an offensive by various classes on the government of the revolutionary dictatorship. The well-to-do elements of the village, the village poor, the workers and peasant poor, on account of their class nature, could carry out neither a consistent bourgeois nor a consistent proletarian policy. And there was no, and could not be, a middle course.

This environment was utilized politically by the bourgeoisie.

The manufacturers, the merchants, the dealers who got rich filling orders for the army, the speculators who evaded the Law of Maximum and who hid themselves from the threatening Revolutionary Tribunal, the merchants who got rich on the sales of the «national property», the so-called «new bourgeoisie» which made its fortune in the years of the Revolution together with «the old» bourgeoisie were waiting for a convenient moment in order to regain the power torn from their hands by the uprising of May 31st-June 2nd, 1793. They protested ever louder and louder against the further application of terror and limitations which were imposed upon them in the spheres of the business activities.

**The Struggle  
of the Jacobins  
with the  
«Madmen».**

We know that the Jacobins gained a victory over the Girondists by uniting with the «madmen», —the defenders of the interests of the city and the village poor, small artisans and workers. The «madmen» demanded

a merciless struggle with all the rich men, merchants and bankers and proposed to clear the Republic of all those «who had anything». However, the «madmen» also did not have any complete economic programme; the proletariat of France of that time did not understand the necessity of destroying the private ownership of the implements and means of production, did not put forward the programme of the Communist transformation of society. However, in contrast to the bourgeois principle of equality of all *before the law*, the «madmen» were already insisting on the carrying out of *«equality in practice», economic equality*.

The further development of the ideas of Jacques Roux and the other leaders of the «madmen» inclined, as we shall see further, toward the socialism of Babeuf.

In the summer and fall of 1793 a severe struggle flared up between the Jacobins and the «madmen». In his speeches Jacques Roux sharply criticized the policy of the Jacobins «who did not do anything for the people» and threatened the Convention with «the spears of the oppressed». In turn, the Jacobins succeeded in expelling Jacques Roux and other leaders of the «madmen» from the revolutionary clubs and curtailed the rights of the Parisian section on which the «madmen» were basing themselves.

In the fall and winter of 1793-94 the Jacobins struck a final blow at the «madmen». Jacques Roux was arrested and stabbed himself with a dagger on learning that his case was being turned over to the Revolutionary Tribunal.

However, the victory over the «madmen» was bought at a high price. The Convention curtailed the rights and activities of those lower organizations which were the basis and the levers of the revolutionary movement. The union of the petty bourgeoisie with the broad masses of the city and the village poor and the workers was beginning to crack.

Soon disagreements began among the Jacobins themselves. The left wing of the Jacobins was grouped around the Paris Commune and were called «Hebertists», after Hebert, a talented journalist and an assistant to the prosecutor of the Paris Commune. His paper «Father Duchene» which reported the main political news in a simple and somewhat crude form was circulated among the Parisian poor in thousands of copies. The Hebertists demanded the energetic carrying on of war for the purpose of extending and strengthening the Revolution, the wide organization of public works, the building of hospitals and homes for the poor, the regular provision of the population with all the articles for daily necessity at stable prices, and the merciless application of terror against all the enemies of the Revolution. The Paris Commune and Hebertists were followed by the poorest strata of the petty bourgeoisie and in the spring of 1794, after the break up of the «madmen» they were supported also by the worker-artisans' circles in Paris, who had lost their leaders in the persons of Jacques Roux and his comrades.

The Hebertists planned to get the means for carrying out of all these measures by taxing the bourgeoisie and the more well-to-do strata of the petty bourgeoisie.

It is understood that Robespierre, who was a typical representative of the petty bourgeoisie, and Danton, who defended the interests of the new bourgeoisie carried on an energetic struggle against Hebert and his adherents.

In March 1794, the Hebertists decided to open a wide offensive. However, the leaders of the Hebertists were not able to develop abroad, clear programme of economic demands which would be clear to the masses. For this reason they did not gain their support. As a result of this the attempts of the Hebertists suffered a defeat. Their leaders were arrested and executed.

The destruction of the Hebertists strengthened the position of the bourgeoisie which grouped around Danton. In his conception Danton occupied, in reality, an intermediary position between the Mountain and Girondists. «Sitting on the top of the mountain Danton was in reality the leader of the «marsh» — Marx said about him. Danton demanded the weakening of the terror, the organization of a «Committee of Mercy» to review the cases of the imprisoned and demanded mainly the full freedom of business activity in order that the enriched bourgeoisie could peacefully enjoy the gains of the bourgeois Revolution. Among other things the Dantonists pointed out the «harmful sides» of the Maximum and demanded its annulment. The victory of the Dantonists meant the victory of the bourgeoisie.

On the other hand, the followers of Robespierre represented the well-to-do strata of the petty bourgeoisie of the city and the village, which wavered between the bourgeoisie and the workers. They either based themselves on the Dantonists against Hebert or entered into an alliance with the Parisian workers and the poor, attempting to utilize them in the struggle against the Dantonists. In a word, the followers of Robespierre manifested those waverings peculiar to just this petty bourgeoisie, whose representatives they were. They were victorious in the struggle against the Dantonists.

A few days after the execution of Hebert followed the arrest and the execution of Danton and a number of his followers. (April, 1794).

However, the position of the followers of Robespierre themselves, was very unstable. In leading the bourgeois revolution to the end, finding themselves face to face with the new *bourgeois* society, the followers of Robespierre, in breaking up the Hebertists and the Dantonists, found themselves in the position of people who stand on the wavering and unstable foundation of the petty bourgeoisie of the city and the village. The slightest wavering of the petty bourgeoisie of the city and of the independent peasantry of the village (the middle and the well-to-do peasantry) to the side of the bourgeoisie would threaten them with the undermining of their power, and a stronger wavering in that direction would make easy their overthrow. At the same time they did not understand and did not take into account the sentiment which was growing stronger in the ranks of the well-to-do petty bourgeoisie and particularly in the ranks of the economically independent peasantry after the destruction of feudalism, the subsiding of the civil war, and after the danger of intervention was further removed. By the very course of historic development the water was flowing on the mill of the bourgeoisie.

With such a state of affairs the downfall of the revolutionary dictatorship became inevitable.

In the summer of 1794, when new victories ensured the triumph of the French Army, a motley bloc from the remnants of the broken up groupings came out against the followers of Robespierre. Active support to these groupings was given by the «Marsh» which, feeling the wave-rings of the petty bourgeoisie and peasantry (middle and well-to-do peasantry), began to act energetically.

**The Counter-revolutionary Uprising of the Ninth of Thermidor.**

On the 9th of Thermidor (July 27th, 1794), Robespierre who came before the Convention was not permitted to speak. A decision was adopted by a majority vote to turn Robespierre and his followers over to the Revolutionary Tribunal. By a decision of the Convention they were declared outlawed.

The Paris Commune and the Jacobin club, which remained on the side of Robespierre, attempted to organize a revolt in his defence. However, the broad masses of workers and the Paris poor responded weakly to their call. They had themselves experienced the inability of the Jacobin Government to lead them out of poverty. And in the Commune itself none of the former leaders enjoyed wide popularity among the Parisian population. As a result of this, the masses who gathered before the hall of the Commune where Robespierre sat on the night from the 9th to the 10th of Thermidor, became thinner and thinner. In the morning a detachment of the Convention walked unhindered into the building of the Commune and arrested Robespierre and his adherents. They were guillotined on the same day, on the 10th of Thermidor.

The change on the 9th of Thermidor marked the end of the revolutionary dictatorship of the Jacobins. The *big bourgeoisie* came out as the victors. The power came into its hands in the French Republic.

**The historical Significance of the Jacobin Dictatorship.** The historical significance of the Jacobin dictatorship, or, in other words, the experience of this dictatorship, has been exceedingly valuable for the entire subsequent struggle of the oppressed classes and, first

of all, for the proletariat. In brief, it can be reduced to the following: that the Jacobins produced an example of a revolution *steadfastly and determinedly going toward the appointed aim, throwing aside, overcoming, all the obstacles arising in its path*. It is not without reason that Lenin stated that a person who is not able to value the great bourgeois revolutionists of that time — Robespierre, Marat and others — does not deserve the name of a proletarian revolutionist.

*The Jacobins have shown an example of revolutionists who are bound up with, receive support from, and rely upon the masses in their work. «The historic greatness of the true Jacobins» consisted in the fact that they were «Jacobins bound up with the people, with the revolutionary majority of the population, with the revolutionary advanced classes of that time» (Lenin).*

In struggling against feudalism, desiring, like Rousseau, to «at the same time» eliminate also the new exploiters, *«the Jacobins of 1793 went into history as a great example of revolutionary struggle against*

the class of exploiters on the part of the class of toilers and oppressed who have taken the State power into their hands» (Lenin).

*The Jacobins have proven that dictatorship of the most revolutionary class is indispensable for the success of every revolution.* In the epoch of the Great French Revolution such a class was represented by the lower strata of the city and the village population, the «plebeian masses» as they are called by Marx.

*The Jacobins have shown in practice that a mass, class revolutionary terror is an indispensable weapon in the hands of the revolutionary class for the purpose of achieving its aim.* «The domination of terror in France could, therefore, serve only for this purpose, that with the blows of its horrible hammer it could wipe off at once, as by magic all the ruins of feudalism from the face of France» (Marx).

*The Jacobins gave a splendid example of struggle against counter-revolution within the country and an example of struggle against intervention from without.* They struggled against the Royalists and Girondists who raised the banner of civil war within the country, they struggled against the intervention and against the feudal encirclement and gave a clear example of how every revolutionary class must conduct itself under similar conditions.

**The Counter-  
Revolutionary  
Blabbering of  
Trotsky about  
Thermidor.**

Already on the eve of the 1905 revolution Trotsky gave a counter-revolutionary estimation of the experience of the Jacobin dictatorship. He talked about the «madness of the Jacobins», about «the utopia» of revolutionary terror and about the guillotine as «the mechanical weapon of political suicide.»

In 1927 Trotsky and the Trotskyites spread the counter-revolutionary fable about the «Thermidorian degeneration» of the Communist Party and of the Soviet Power, the dictatorship of the proletariat in the USSR. This counter-revolutionary blabbering of Trotsky and of his supporters also proves their ignorance of the most elementary in the sphere of history. The events of the 9th of Thermidor took place in France not because of «degeneration» of the Jacobin dictatorship, — there was no «degeneration» of the dictatorship, — but these events came as a result of the impossibility of the prolonged existence of the petty bourgeois dictatorship. The Jacobin dictatorship fell, not on account of «degeneration», but under the pressure of the bourgeoisie to whose side swam the well-to-do peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie.

The illiteracy of the counter-revolutionary Trotskyite-blabbers is also exposed in the fact that they compare the French *bourgeois* Revolution with the October *socialist* Revolution. «The October Revolution is neither the continuation nor the completion of the Great French Revolution. The aim of the French Revolution was liquidation of feudalism for the establishment of capitalism. While the aim of the October Revolution is the liquidation of capitalism for the establishment of socialism» (Stalin).

The illiteracy of the blabbering of the counter-revolutionary Trotskyites is also exposed in the fact that they confused the *revolutionary-democratic* dictatorship of the *petty bourgeoisie* with the *socialist* dictatorship of the *proletariat*. In France the dictatorship was realized by the petty bourgeoisie which on account of its class nature

and wavering was not able to lead a consistent struggle against the pressure of the bourgeoisie.

In the USSR the dictatorship is being realized by the socialist proletariat, under the leadership of its Party, which is carrying on a firm, steadfast policy for the full *liquidation* of the capitalist classes, for their full destruction and for the building up of a classless socialistic society.

The counter-revolutionary blabbering of Trotsky and the Trotskyites was necessary for them in order to deny the socialist character of the October Revolution, to deny the possibility of the victory of socialism in the USSR and, by this very fact, to ideologically prepare the restoration of capitalism in the USSR. In blabbering about the «Thermidorian degeneration» they came out as the agents of the international bourgeoisie. It is not surprising therefore, that after being driven out from the ranks of the Communist Party they openly went over into the services of their bourgeois masters and became the advance guard of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie.

## §12. The End of the Convention and the Epoch of the Directory.

**The Thermidorian Reaction.** With the fall of Robespierre the ascending course of the French Revolution came to an end. The epoch of reaction had set in. The victors of the 9th of Thermidor — «the Thermidorians», who represented on a whole the interests of the new bourgeoisie, came to power.

Shortly after the execution of Robespierre began the execution and persecution of the broad circles of his adherents. White terror spread over the whole of France. Many prominent revolutionists were executed and sent into exile and the surviving Girondists returned to the Convention. The Jacobin club was closed. The Paris Commune destroyed. In place of the former sections Paris was divided into 12 municipal administrations not connected with each other. The Convention abolished the Revolutionary Tribunal and cancelled the Law of the Maximum. Gold and silver coin was again put into circulation.

**The Attempts at Uprising in the Spring of 1795.** The annulment of the Maximum and the high cost of living which followed it affected most painfully the working population of Paris. It is true that now the average worker received from 100 to 120 livres a day but the price of a pound of bread was 50, and a pound of meat cost from 100-120 livres. The sharp worsening in the condition of the city poor once more brought an outburst of the revolutionary movement. In the Spring of 1795 the hungry Parisian workers and the poor twice attempted to raise a rebellion under the slogan: «Bread and the Constitution of 1793!»

However, these attempts were suppressed by armed force. The Jacobin Constitution of 1793 remained, without being carried into life. In 1795, the Convention which was now run by the «Marsh» defended the interests of the new bourgeoisie and before its disbandment worked out a new Constitution for bourgeois France<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> This is the Constitution of 1795, and, according to the republican calendar, it was named «the Constitution of the Third Year».



**The Epoch of  
the Directory  
(1795—1799).**

This Constitution preserved the Republican order but granted electoral rights only to the well-to-do citizens.

Legislative power was given over to two Chambers, the Chamber of 500 and the Chamber of the Elders. The executive power of the Republic was turned over to five «elected directors» and from this the entire order received the name of a *Directory*. The period of the Directory (1795-1799) was a golden age for the big rapacious and speculating bourgeoisie.

The rich and the well-to-do peasants did not do badly. The cancellation of feudal duties and the church tithe, the lowering of the tax yoke, the extension of the land property at the expense of the former nobility and of the church estates — all of this facilitated the enrichment of these sections of the peasantry. The land increased in price.

As a result of the Revolution *that section of the well-to-do peasantry which became a dependable mainstay of the bourgeois order grew and was strengthened in France*. The condition of the peasant poor continued to remain very difficult.

**The Condition  
of the Workers  
and of the City  
Poor.**

The condition of the workers and of the city poor was also difficult. Alongside of the high cost of living the workers suffered from terrible unemployment. During the years of the wars and revolutions French industry experienced a decline. It was short of raw

material, foreign markets were lost, France was flooded with foreign goods. Many of the enterprises closed down, tens of thousands of workers were thrown out on the streets. The high cost of living and unemployment brought the workers to the condition of despair. On account of hunger, suicides became ever more frequent. The slightest attempts at struggle for increased pay were punished severely. The law of Le-Chapellier passed by the Constituent Assembly (June 14th, 1791) was steadily applied against workers' unions.

**Babeuf and the  
conspiracy of  
the «Equals».**

It was in this environment that a conspiracy of the «equals» was formed which was the *first revolutionary-communist* movement in France. This movement is closely connected with the name of Babeuf.

Babeuf was born and grew up in a poor family; from his early youth he was compelled to earn his own living. In working as an employee in the feudal archives of the seigneurs, Babeuf witnessed many shocking injustices in the land deals. Already in 1789, at the beginning of the Revolution, Babeuf published a work in which he demanded an equal division of land among all citizens. However Babeuf did not stop with this «levelling» programme. A few years later, in the epoch of the Directory, Babeuf was already preaching *communist views* forged by him during the first years of the Revolution. 14

In the opinion of Babeuf, private property had to be destroyed. «No one can acquire land or industrial property exclusively for himself without committing by this a crime» — declares the manifesto of the «Equals»<sup>1</sup>. The future society must be based on social property. «Labour and consumption must be common for all.» The whole of society

<sup>1</sup> The adherents of Babeuf called themselves «the Society of the Equals» as they were striving to achieve a real property *equality*, based on the destruction of private property.

constitutes «one big social family» where there are neither rich nor poor.

These communist ideas, Babeuf accompanied with a call to active movement, preaching the revolutionary struggle, armed insurrection and the capture of power, the establishment of the dictatorship of the toilers with the purpose of the communist reconstruction of society.

The significance of Babeuf consists in the very fact that he was simultaneously *not only a communist, but a practical revolutionist.*

During the transition period when the power is in the hands of the toilers terror must be applied to the enemies of the new order. «The enemy must be suppressed with an iron hand,» wrote Babeuf. «Of what avail is freedom to the poor and beggar when it is being used by the rich? Our freedom is—slavery for the rich, we must break them up and establish the dictatorship of the poor.»



Babeuf.

Regarding the immediate measures after the capture of power the «Act of Uprisings» drawn up by the followers of Babeuf pointed out the seizure by the people of all the stores with supplies and the free distribution of bread to the poor, the immediate distribution among the poor of the property confiscated from the enemies of the people, the return, free of charge, to the poor of things, etc. pawned by them in the state pawnshops.

In the teachings of Babeuf there was much that was raw and utopian. Thus, although Babeuf connected the victory of his teaching with the revolutionary capture of power by the toilers, nevertheless, he did not clearly understand the significance of the class struggle and did not see

in the proletariat the only revolutionary class in the capitalist society which is consistent to the end. Babeuf talked about the dictatorship of the toilers, but not about the dictatorship of the proletariat. Nor did Babeuf understand the necessity of connecting his struggle for the final aim with the daily economic demands of the proletariat.

Around May, 1796, the followers of Babeuf considered themselves sufficiently prepared and wanted to set the day for the uprising. However, a provocateur who had penetrated into Babeuf's organization reported this to the police. In May 1796, Babeuf and his adherents were arrested and, after a year of imprisonment, were put on trial. Babeuf and one of his comrades were condemned to death and seven of the others to exile. The execution took place May 27th, 1797. However, even if the plans of Babeuf had not been discovered by the police through the report of the provocateur they would have been doomed to failure. Neither the economic order in France nor its working class were at that time sufficiently ripe for the proletarian socialist revolution.

Nevertheless, the conspiracy of the «Equals» has a great significance. *This was the first attempt to realize communist ideas in practice by*

*revolutionary methods, by means of armed insurrection, the capture of power and the establishment of the dictatorship of the toilers. It is not in vain that the followers of Babeuf considered the French revolution «only a forerunner of another, more glorious revolution which will be the last revolution».*

### § 13. On the Road to the Military - Bourgeois Dictatorship.

#### **The Growth of Influence of the Army.**

In addition to the upper strata of the bourgeoisie and of the rich peasantry, there was still another real power on which the government of the Directory was relying. This force was the French army.

In the epoch of the Thermidorian reaction and in the first years of the Directory, the French troops continued to score one victory after another. They occupied Belgium, Holland, the German kingdoms near the Rhine and northern Italy. The wars of the Directory were no longer of a defensive character but those of conquest. A number of districts were added to France. The defeated countries were levied with great payments of money (contributions). These contributions were used to fill the chronically empty treasury of the Directory. Thus, for instance the republican general Napoleon Bonaparte imposed on one of the districts of northern Italy a contribution of 20 million livres. Under his command the French army entered Rome, arrested the Pope and sent him to France.

In this way the victories of the French general became a source of large sums of money flowing into the treasury of the Directory. The French bourgeois state at that time existed to a considerable degree at the expense of the military contributions. But the larger these payments the greater became the dependence of the Directory on the army and its leaders.

#### **The Degeneration of the French Army.**

In the meantime the character of the French army changed considerably. A long period of military service separated the soldier from his social environment. The soldiers grew accustomed to know themselves as something separate, isolated from all their people. Their personal welfare they no longer linked up with the triumph of the revolution, but with the successes and good luck of their commander. They viewed contemptuously the government of the Directory, which was neither capable of maintaining order in the country, nor of properly organizing supplies for the army. Under such circumstances the army could easily become a weapon in the hands of some ambitious and energetic general. And the more unstable was the position of the Directory the more likely would have been such a result.

#### **The Unstable Position on the Front.**

In the beginning of the Directory the condition of affairs on the front was good. In 1795 the French Republic concluded peace with Prussia which recognized the conquered possessions of France. In 1797 defeated Austria was also compelled to conclude peace. Belgium and a part of Italy were joined to France; around it was formed a number of «daughter» republics from the conquered district.

However England remained invincible. Its island position with the supremacy of the English fleet made it impregnable for the French troops. After the unsuccessful attempts to land a French detachment in Ireland where a revolutionary uprising against the English yoke of exploitation began, the Directory attempted to strike a blow at England in the countries which were supplying it with raw materials and to capture its markets beyond the seas. Under the command of Napoleon Bonaparte a great expedition was dispatched to Egypt; great plans were made for a march on India. However this plot also ended in failure. The English fleet crushed

the French squadron in the Mediterranean and the Egyptian army found itself cut off from France.

In the meantime England was successful in forming a new coalition (union) against the French republic. This time England was joined by Russia, Austria and Turkey. The Russian tsar sent his soldiers under the command of Suvorov over thousands of miles throughout Europe in order to smash the French «sedition». Half frozen the Russian soldiers recruited from the serf peasants climbed over the Alps in a deep snow. The united forces of the Russian-Austrian troops under the command of Suvorov dealt a number of defeats to the French army. In 1799 the troops of the Directory were compelled to evacuate northern Italy. This failure made the situation at the front very serious. France strained all its forces, but the end of the war was not in sight.

#### **The Unstable Position of the Directory.**

The position within the republic became very unstable. On the one hand the Directory was constantly threatened by the indignation of the lower sections of the population (the attempts of uprising in the fall of 1795, the conspiracy of Babeuf) and, on the other hand, the monarchists did not seize the opportunity to restore the old order. So in the fall of 1795 the monarchists organized a whole army of adherents and surrounded the Convention. Only with the assistance of general Bonaparte were the monarchist detachments dispersed and the Convention freed. The government of the Directory was floundering, fearing now the «Jacobin danger», now the conspiracy of the monarchists.

The unstable position of the Directory weighed very heavily on the bourgeoisie. It dreamt of a firm power which would once and for all put an end to the «red danger» and to the conspiracy of the monarchists. With the exceptional position which the army and its leaders occupied during the period of the Directory, such a «firm power» could be only a *military dictatorship*. It was only a question as to which of the most successful and daring generals would first take advantage of the existing situation and take the power into his hands.

#### **The Coup d'Etat of the 18th Brumaire (November 1799).**

This position was seized by the talented and ambitious general, Napoleon Bonaparte, a native of the island of Corsica. Bonaparte already served as an officer prior to the revolution.

He first became prominent during the siege of Toulon by the troops of the Convention during the dictatorship of the Jacobins. In this period he was friendly with the young brother of Robespierre, but after the overthrow of the Jacobin dictatorship, he went over to the side of the Thermidorians. In the fall of 1795 the Thermidorian Convention entrusted Bonaparte with the defence of the Convention from attack by the rebelling monarchists; Bonaparte coped splendidly with this task and in the spring of 1796 the Directory appointed Bonaparte the chief commander of the Italian army. Here Bonaparte scored a number of splendid victories and compelled Austria to conclude peace on conditions very favourable to France.

The Italian march covered Bonaparte with a splendour of military glory. His name gained exceptional popularity in France. Paris met the victorious general who had not only repulsed the invasion of the foreign enemy but also the attacks of monarchists with exultation. The Directory began to feel the danger which threatened it in the form of this exceptionally successful general. It decided to remove Bonaparte from Paris, placing him at the head of the Egyptian expedition. How-

ever, the French army again began to suffer defeats. In learning of the condition of affairs, Napoleon decided that the moment had come to realize his old ambitious plans. He left the Egyptian army to the mercy of fate and suddenly appeared in Paris. The bourgeoisie, in fear of foreign invasion, was ready to sacrifice its political claims if only it could preserve the economic advantages acquired during the revolution. It was ready to greet any firm power that was able to insure the bourgeois order within France as well as the safety of its borders. It is not surprising, therefore, that under such conditions Bonaparte became an idol of the bourgeoisie. «The dictatorship of the sword» in the person of Napoleon fully corresponded to its interests. The large bourgeoisie gave Bonaparte substantial financial support. For instance, one of the large providers for the army, Kollé, advanced 500,000 francs in gold to Bonaparte for the realization of his plan.

The government coup d'état was carried out on November 9th, 1799 (18th of Brumaire according to the republican calendar). On the same date by decision of the Directory, the majority of which Bonaparte attracted to his side, the session of the Legislative corps was transferred from Paris to a small city, St. Cloud, and those members of the Directory who were not sympathetic to the revolt, were arrested. When the deputies of the Legislative Assembly inquired of Bonaparte the reasons for the events that were taking place, instead of receiving a reply they were simply dispersed by a detachment of the Napoleonic soldiers.

Thus the revolt of the 18th Brumaire took place. It did not meet resistance among any classes of the population. Workers were not at all anxious to defend the government of the Directory under which they were dying of hunger. The big bourgeoisie craved a firm power and was openly sympathetic to the revolt. It was not in vain that the stock exchange answered these events by raising the course of the state currency. The propertied stratas of the French peasantry were ready to support anyone who would guarantee them the inviolability of their holdings. They sympathized with the transfer of power to the hands of a general whose name was connected with ensuring order within the country and with splendid victories at the front.

## § 14. The Epoch of the Consuls and of the first Empire.

**The Class Essence of the First Empire.**

The revolt of the 18th Brumaire (Nov. 9th, 1799) established the military dictatorship of Bonaparte in France. General Bonaparte became «the first consul» of the French Republic and received dictatorial rights.

Shortly afterwards he became a permanent consul and in 1804 he became the Emperor of France under the name of Napoleon I.

In the centre — the unlimited power of the Emperor — and in the provinces, in place of the former elected authorities, — the all powerful officials (prefects) appointed by Napoleon, — such was the order of the French empire in the beginning of the 19th century. For the purpose of strengthening the Empire, Napoleon concluded an agreement with the catholic church. «In religion», stated Napoleon, «I am interested in the fact that it diverts to heaven the idea of

equality, which interferes with the domination of the rich over the poor. With my gendarmes and my clergy I can do everything.» In agreement with the Pope, the catholic faith was declared, to be «the religion of the majority of Frenchmen». A part of the church land confiscated during the revolution which still remained unsold was returned to the clergy. The priests received salaries from the state treasury and became true servants of the empire.

On which classes did the Empire base itself?

The *big bourgeoisie of France* was the first to hasten to utilize the order which was to its advantage. After the revolution, which destroyed the guilds, and a number of restrictive rules and decrees, French industry began to revive.

French industry was now confronted with the task of changing from manufacture, based upon the hand labour of the artisan, into large machine industry.

The French bourgeoisie having freed itself from the bonds of feudalism was striving at any cost not only to overtake the English bourgeoisie but also to defeat it in the struggle for economic and political supremacy. The French bourgeoisie was ready to reconcile itself to the loss of political rights since the Napoleonic empire strengthened its economic gains, held the working class in check, and promised victory over her old rival — the bourgeoisie of England.

The Napoleonic Empire was also supported by the *propertied stratas of the French peasantry*. Above all also the well-to-do peasantry saw in Napoleon a defender and guardian of their acquired lands. «For the peasant property owner landholding, magnified and rounded out by the imagination, was the embodiment of the fatherland» (Marx).

The Social  
Economic Policy  
of the Napoleonic  
Government.

The entire policy of the Napoleonic government was carried on in the interests of these classes (the big bourgeoisie and the well-to-do sections of the peasantry).

The inviolability of the rights of buyers of national property was conditioned in a special article of the Napoleonic constitution; the bourgeois order created by the revolution was officially confirmed in a special code of laws — the so-called *civil code* of Napoleon. Over 800 articles of this code dealt with the sacred right of bourgeois private property. «Property is the right to use things unconditionally and unlimited by anything, except by the duty of submitting to the law», — stated the code of Napoleon. The code confirmed the equality of all before the law and strengthened the bourgeois family as the basic unit of bourgeois society. «My true glory is not in the fact that I won forty battles,» stated Napoleon about himself. «That which cannot be forgotten, which will live forever is my civil code.»

At the same time the *commercial code* which guarded the interests of the commercial-industrial bourgeoisie was also to be drawn. For the sake of preserving the income of the bourgeoisie the progressive income tax was cancelled. The indirect taxes weighed heavier and heavier upon the toilers. At the same time for the purpose of maintaining connection with the banking circles, the Bank of France, was established

and received great privileges. Napoleon himself was one of the shareholders of the bank.

The *industrial* bourgeoisie constituted that strata whose interests the Napoleonic government placed in the forefront. Under Napoleon large sums of money were advanced from the state treasury for the support of shops and factories.

In addition to that, the Napoleonic government insured the industrial enterprises with large government orders.

#### **The Policy in Relation to the Working Class.**

The policy of the Napoleonic government towards the workinez class was dictated by the interests of the bourgeoisie. During encounters of the workers with the bosses the government openly sided with the latter. The law prohibited strikes and punished strikers with prison sentences of one month to five years. The law of Le-Chapelier, established in 1791 prohibiting unions, still remained in force. And finally, fearing the activities of the working class, the Napoleonic government submitted the workers to strict police supervision.

In the words of one of his ministers, Napoleon «feared the slightest unrest of the workers more than a lost battle». For this reason the Napoleonic government in order to deceive the workers took care to alleviate some of its hardship, want and poverty. Public works were organized for the struggle against unemployment and a certain portion of government orders was given to artisans, etc. This was a bone thrown to the working class together with its enslavement by the police.

#### **The External Policy of the Napoleonic Government.**

The foreign policy of Napoleon was also determined by the interests of the bourgeoisie and mainly by its industrial circles. By the carrying on of uninterrupted war Bonaparte defended bourgeois France from the counter-revolutionary invasion of the feudal landlord states (Austria, Russia, Prussia). On the other hand, obeying the will of the French bourgeoisie he entered into a mad struggle with the English bourgeoisie, which was ahead of France for economic and political supremacy in Europe.

The splendid victories of the first years of the consulate and Empire turned over into the hands of Napoleon almost the whole of continental Europe. The allies were smashed to pieces. Berlin and Vienna were occupied by French troops. France was surrounded by numerous states subordinated to it, at the head of which Napoleon placed his numerous relatives.

«France secured the recognition of its rights in Genoa, Piedmont and a number of other Italian possessions. The Neapolitan crown first received Napoleon's brother *Joseph Bonaparte* and later it was transferred to Napoleon's marshal *Marat* while *Joseph Bonaparte* received Spain. The administration of Holland Napoleon turned over to another brother — *Louis Bonaparte*. Out of the sixteen individual states of Germany (Baden, Bavaria, Wurtemberg) was organized the Rhine union where Napoleon was a virtual master. Napoleon re-established the «independent» Duchy of Warsaw out of the Polish possessions captured by Prussia.

The peace concluded in 1807 in Tilsith, where a meeting of the Russian and the French emperors took place, marked the climax of the Napoleonic glory. Following the victories of the French troops inevitably came the commercial agreements advantageous to the French industrial bourgeoisie. However French industry was lagging far behind the English.



### **The Continental Blockade.**

Under the pressure of the French bourgeoisie, Napoleon decided to cut England off from continental Europe and in this way to undermine British commerce and industry. By special decrees (1806—1807,—1810) Napoleon ordered all the dependent countries to break commercial relations with England. Goods from ships which entered English harbours were treated as contraband and confiscated without compensation. It was as though almost all continental Europe was fenced off from England by a thick wall and was being transformed into a monopoly market for French industry. This was the essence of the famous «continental blockade». All the allies of France and among them also Russia were compelled to observe this continental blockade — the disruption of commercial relations with England.

### **The Failure of the Blockade.**

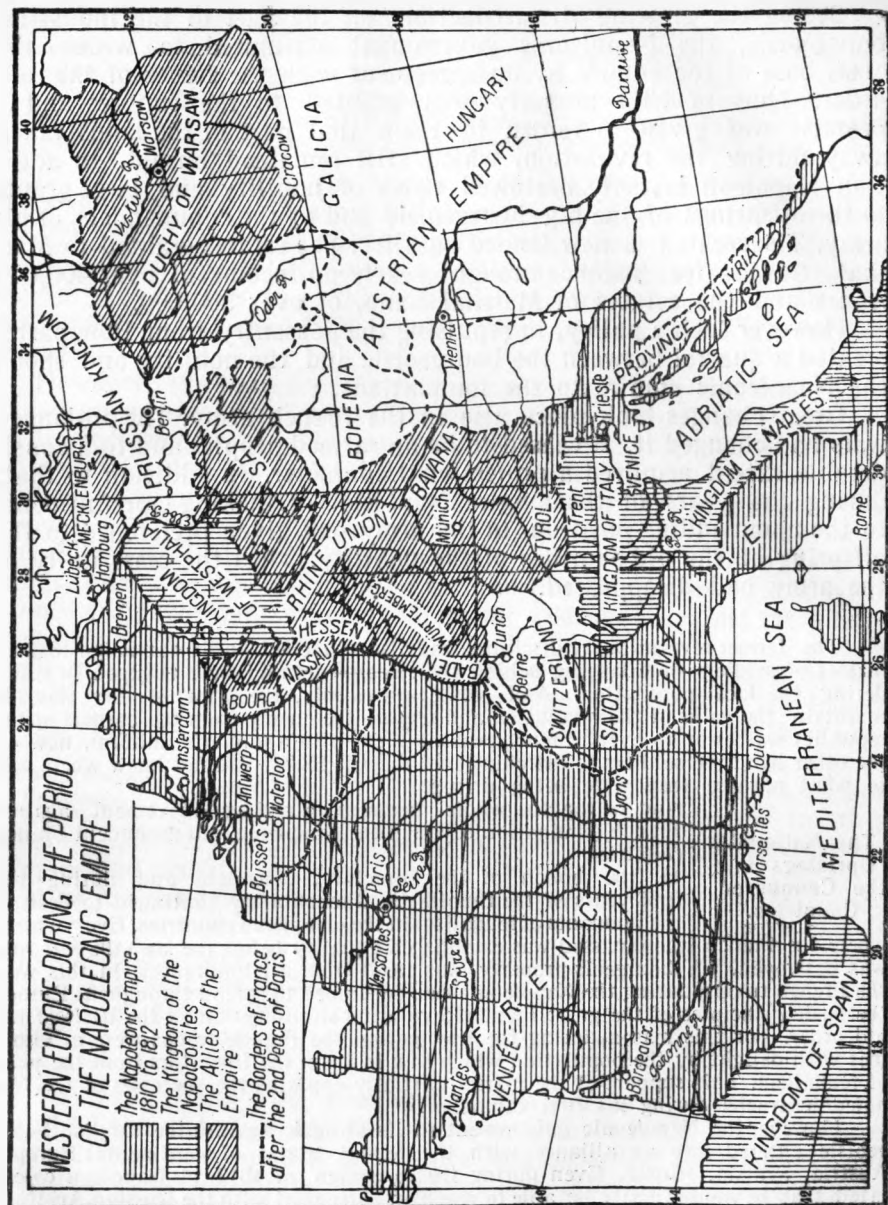
However the continental blockade did not justify the hopes of the French bourgeoisie. In answer to the declaration of the continental blockade, England declared that it would not permit those countries whose harbours would be closed to British ships to carry on naval trade. Taking advantage of its supremacy on the sea, the English fleet seized the commercial ships of France and its allies.

In addition to this French industry was unable to supply Europe with goods in that quantity and of such quality as the English. In spite of the carrying out of the threat to burn up English goods, contraband trade in these goods was growing; the French government did not have sufficient forces to fight against it.

The French government itself was not able to get along without English goods: the French army was dressed in English clothes and wore English shoes. During the last years of the empire the Napoleonic government was even compelled to give individual permits for the purchase of certain commodities in England. The weakness of French industry was particularly sharply emphasized by this.

In addition, the continental blockade also struck very hard at a number of countries for which trade with England was a matter of life and death. Their impoverishment was also reflected in the turnover of French trade; the bankrupt countries were not able to buy the goods which French industry tried to sell to them. As a result, English foreign trade was growing while the turnover of French trade decreased by one and a half times from 1801 to 1812. In this way, the carrying out of the continental blockade had, in the final analysis, struck at the French bourgeoisie itself.

In addition to that, the claims of the French industrialists supported by the Napoleonic army were arousing a sharp dissatisfaction amongst the ruling classes of other countries. Particularly indignant were the Russian landlords and merchants who for years past had been making big profits from export of bread to England, timber, hemp, sacking and other raw material. Their pressure compelled Alexander I to declare to Napoleon his refusal to maintain the continental blockade. This refusal meant the disruption of the entire system established by Bonaparte; he declared war against Russia and began his famous march on Moscow. The war of 1812—14 ended in the defeat of the French army and the collapse of the Napoleonic empire.



### The Internal Crisis of the Empire.

In the meantime great unrest was ripening in France itself. The peasantry, bankrupt by uninterrupted wars, exhausted by taxes and recruit duties, craved peace. The bourgeoisie, disappointed in the successes of the Napoleonic policy, no longer wanted to support a power which could secure for it neither raw material nor a stable market for its goods.

Seeing the growing dissatisfaction on the part of the industrial bourgeoisie, the Napoleonic government attempted to widen the class base of the empire by an agreement with the forces of the old order. Thus in 1811 amnesty was granted to the emigrés and a promise was given to return to them that part of the lands taken away during the revolution, which still remained unsold. In addition Napoleon lavishly bestowed titles of nobility and large grants to the offsprings of the big bourgeoisie and to the commanders of his army. Thus created a new landed nobility. The estates granted to Marshal Davout for instance brought yearly an income of over 400,000 francs and the estates of Marshal Lano, of over 300,000.

However such a policy, in repulsing the peasantry from Bonaparte, created a quarrel between the bourgeoisie and the nobility and shook the Napoleonic empire to the foundations.

Great changes took place also in the French army. The prolonged wars had changed it. It ceased to be an «armed people» and to a considerable extent acquired a professional character. In addition to that, during the years of the empire Napoleon in making appointments to the commanding positions in the army had given preference to the offspring of the old families of the nobility. Thus the class unity of the army had disappeared.

The former revolutionary discipline had also weakened. In the campaign 1812-14 masses of soldiers were lagging behind their regiments and were engaged in plundering the local population. And while previously, the aim of the war (to maintain the gains of the revolution and repulse the enemy from the borders of the republic) was clear to every French peasant dressed in a soldier's uniform, now on the other hand the soldiers in marching into distant Russia did not know where and to what purpose they were being driven.

And to top the whole business a serious movement against French domination began in the conquered and dependent French countries.

#### **The National Uprisings in the Conquered Countries.**

In the epoch of the Directory, Consulate and during the first years of the Empire the French army continued to destroy the remnants of feudalism in the conquered countries. Everywhere, where the French troops passed was established equality before the law, the serf rule was destroyed, the bourgeois property was freed from all hindrances. In this way the French troops, during the Napoleonic rule continued to spread throughout Europe the basic principles of the great French Revolution and undermined the basis of the old order. For this reason during the first period the French troops were at times met with delight by the population which saw in them the liberators from the yoke of feudalism. This support of the masses partially explains the successes of the Napoleonic troops during his first campaign.

However the Napoleonic government in its struggle against the English bourgeoisie entered into an alliance with the feudal states of continental Europe: Austria, Prussia, Russia. Even during the campaign of 1812-14 Napoleon calculated that he would finally be able to reach an agreement with the Russian, Austrian and Prussian landlords. Neither in Prussia nor in czarist Russia did Napoleon make any attempt to abolish serfdom or to free the Prussian and the Russian peasants from the feudal yoke. Napoleon did not even take advantage of the peasant unrest in order to disintegrate feudal, landlord Russia from within, but on the contrary, severely suppressed the peasant uprisings. As a result of this the peasants turned against the Napoleonic army.

Furthermore the large financial contributions, the constant requisition of foodstuffs for the needs of the army, the general burden of the military occupation, rapidly aroused the population of the conquered countries against the Frenchmen.

On the basis of the general dissatisfaction a wide movement started in the conquered countries against the conquerors. In 1809 an open revolt flared up in Spain.

Napoleon had to place his troops everywhere for the purpose of «maintaining order; exhausted France was no longer able to maintain such a wide front.

All of this forecast the unsuccessful outcome for France of the campaign of 1812. Of the great army of Napoleon only 18,000 recrossed the Niemen. Napoleon himself dropped the remnants of his army and hastened to France to gather a new army.

**The Overthrow  
of Napoleon.  
„Hundred  
Days“.**

In 1814 the troops of Russia, Prussia, England and Austria dealt the French army a decisive blow. In the spring of 1814 the allied troops entered Paris and compelled Napoleon to abdicate. With the force of bayonets the allies restored the king's power in France

and placed Louis the 18th<sup>1</sup>, the brother of Louis the 16th on the throne.

However, the hatred of France against the Bourbons who were forced upon it by armed power was so great that Napoleon again succeeded in temporarily taking over the power into his hands. In 1815 he escaped from the Island of Elba in the Mediterranean Sea to which he had been exiled and landed in the southern part of France. The troops sent by the Bourbons against Napoleon went over to his side. The Bourbons fled and Napoleon again returned to Paris and for a hundred days he was again the emperor of France. However, exhausted France no longer had sufficient forces for a struggle against the numerous armies of the allies.

In the battle of Waterloo (1815) the French army was defeated. Napoleon was taken prisoner by the Englishmen and sent to the Island of St. Helena. There he remained until his death and the Bourbons were again restored in France. A European congress was called in Vienna in 1814 to decide the fate of France and other states. The decisive rôle in this congress was played by the victorious countries — England, Austria, Prussia and Russia.

**The Vienna  
Congress.**

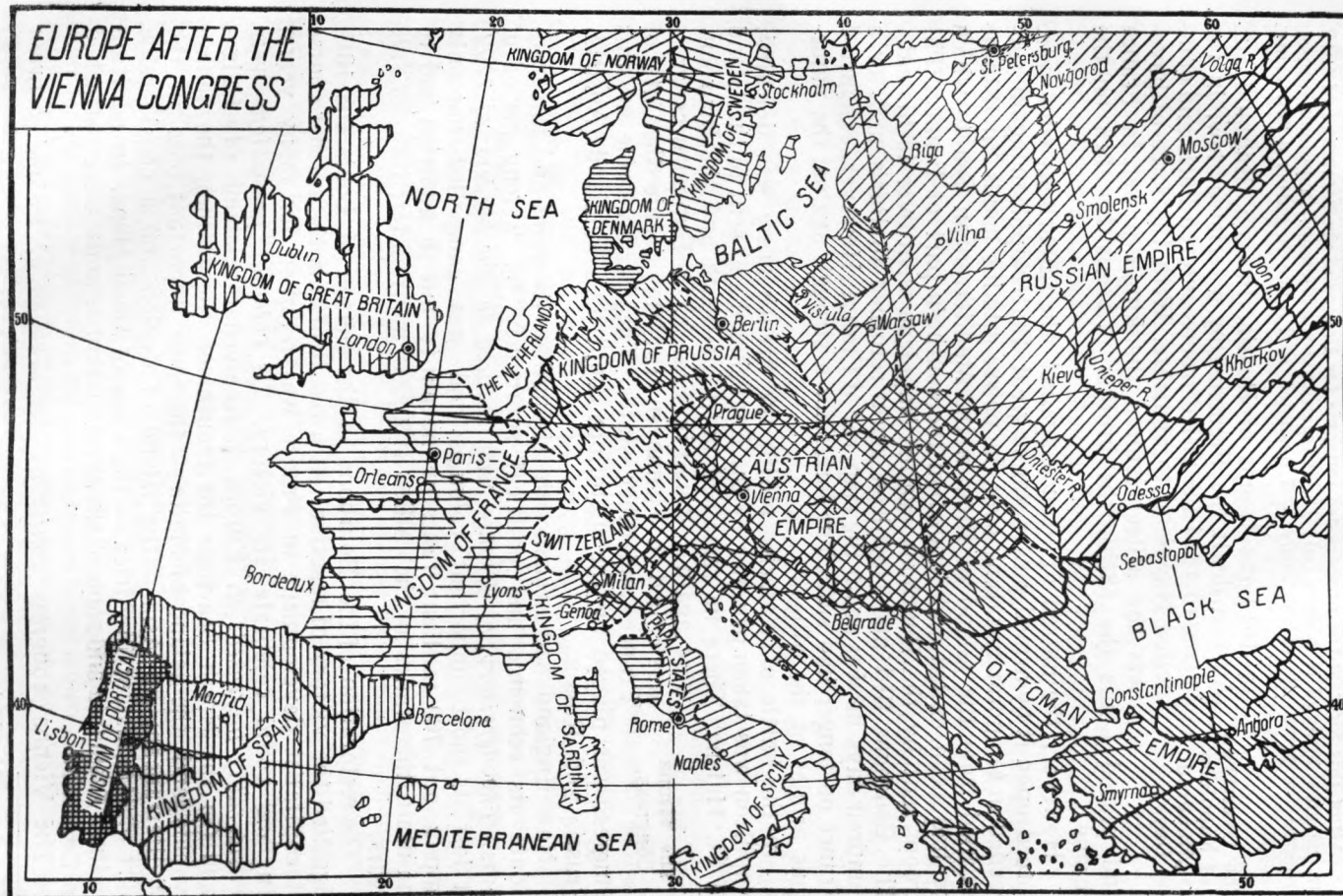
Now England had a chance to strengthen its gains and to consolidate its economic and political supremacy for a long period of time. *The territory of France was reduced to the borders of 1792.* It lost its most important colonies and was compelled not only to pay out 700 million francs in indemnity but in addition had to maintain the armies of the allies (150,000 men) on territory for five years.

The restoration of the Bourbons in the person of Louis the 18th signified the victory of reaction. As a result of this the further course of capitalist development in France was retarded for many years. England could celebrate its victory. *Its colonial possessions were considerably increased.* In Europe it received the island of Helgoland (in the North Sea near the mouth of the Rhine), the Ionian Islands and the Island of Malta — the most important base in the Mediterranean; in Asia — the island of Ceylon and a considerable part of Hindustan; in Africa — the Cape of Good Hope. In addition to that Tasmania and some of the West Indian islands were attached to England.

The Vienna congress confirmed the division of Poland between

<sup>1</sup> Louis the 17th who died in infancy was considered the son of Louis 16th, who was executed in 1793.

# EUROPE AFTER THE VIENNA CONGRESS



*Austria, Prussia and Russia*<sup>1</sup>. In addition Austria received some of the provinces in Italy. Prussia extended its possessions at the expense of some of the German Duchies<sup>2</sup>. Tsarist Russia received Finland and Bessarabia.

**The «Holy Alliance».**

Alongside with the remaking of the map of Europe to the advantage of the victors, the leaders of the Vienna congress set for themselves the task of struggling against the revolutionary movement no matter where it should appear. Just as after the robber Versailles peace of 1919 the League of Nations, the bulwark of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie of the 20th century was created, for the maintenance of the Versailles system, so, at the Vienna congress the «Holy Alliance» as the bulwark of feudal reaction was created. The Russian tsars (first Alexander 1st and then Nicholas 1st) and the Austrian minister, Metternich, were the promoters of the reactionary policy of the «Holy Alliance». In the course of thirty years they played the rôle of «gendarmes of Europe» and dispatched troops «to maintain order» in various countries.

**The International Significance of the Great French Revolution.**

However the «Holy Alliance» was powerless to turn back the wheels of history. The great French Revolution, which put an end to the feudal order in France, had a great international significance. The advance representatives of the European bourgeois-democracy greeted «the Declaration of Rights of Man» — the manifesto of the revolutionary bourgeoisie of the 18th century enthusiastically. Revolutionary unrest was fermenting in England, Ireland and various German states. In the countries conquered by France the old feudal order was being destroyed and the basis laid for the new bourgeois society. The basis of the feudal order was also being undermined in those states which were not directly subordinated to France. Thus, for instance, the Prussian government in order to draw to its side the peasantry and other layers of the population was compelled to carry out a whole series of reforms which was undermining the basis of the feudal society. Even in tsarist Russia the government had to carry out laws pertaining to the position of the peasantry. Thus, for instance, the corvée was limited and the peasants were allowed to submit complaints against the landlord.

The French Revolution is a classical, typical bourgeois democratic revolution. It decisively liquidated the feudal order and cleared the ground for the bourgeois society. In contrast to the later bourgeois revolutions the French bourgeoisie played in the first stage of the revolution the rôle of one of the driving forces and was able to consolidate around itself, although for a short period of time, the toiling masses of France in their onslaught against feudalism and absolutism.

It was possible for the bourgeoisie to play this rôle because «the proletariat and the fractions of society which did not belong to the bourgeoisie and had as yet no interests not coinciding with the interests

<sup>1</sup> Poland as an independent state did not exist since the time of the Vienna Congress until the Versailles peace of 1919.

<sup>2</sup> During the time of the great French Revolution and of the Napoleonic government so many political changes had taken place in Germany, that the congress recognized out of the former 350 German states only 39.



of the bourgeoisie or had not as yet formed any independent developing classes or sections of classes» (*Marx*).

It is just because the proletariat had not as yet put out its slogan, had not developed its program that «in 1789 the petty bourgeoisie could still be great revolutionists» (*Lenin*).

The decisive offensive of the workers, peasants and the petty bourgeoisie of the city completed the bourgeois democratic revolution in France.

The revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the Jacobins had so definitely put an end to the feudal order in France itself, that even the mad reaction of the landlords, which was established in France with the restoration of Bourbons, was not able to resurrect it.

And the bourgeois democratic revolution carried to the final end, had a great significance for the further development of the class struggle for the struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie.

«The bourgeois revolution is unquestionably necessary in the interests of the proletariat. The fuller and the more decisive, the more consistent will be the bourgeois revolution, the more secure will be the struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie for socialism» (*Lenin*).

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## THE CHARTIST MOVEMENT IN ENGLAND.

## § 15. The Social-Economic Development and the Political Struggle in England in the First Third of the 19th Century.

The Completion  
of the Industrial Revolution  
in England.

The industrial revolution which began in England in the second half of the 18th century was finally completed in the first half of the following century. In the middle of the 19th century England had by far surpassed the other European countries and had won undisputed supremacy on the world market.

In 1844 Engels thus depicted its industrial successes: «Sixty, eighty years ago, England was a country like every other, with small towns, few and simple industries, and a thin but proportionally large agricultural population. To-day it is a country like no other, with a capital of two and a half million inhabitants, with vast manufacturing cities, with an industry that supplies the world, and produces almost everything by means of the most complex machinery; with an industrious, intelligent, dense population, of which two-thirds are employed in trade and commerce, and composed of classes wholly different, forming, in fact, with other customs and other needs, a different nation from the England of those days.»

Toward the forties the agrarian revolution was completed in the village. The peasantry had already completely disappeared. The city population exceeded the village population by almost three times.

However the completely formed large capitalist industry of England was developing unevenly. The years of revival were replaced by years of crisis and depressions<sup>1</sup>. The large economic crisis acquired international proportions — the crisis of 1825, 1836-1837 and 1847-48 hit English industry particularly hard, clearly exposing the entire depth of the contradictions of the capitalist system. At the same time a sharpening of the class contradictions was manifested in a wide revolutionary movement of the English proletariat, which threatened the very existence of the ruling classes in England. This revolutionary movement was *Chartism*. Let us examine the conditions under which this movement arose.

<sup>1</sup> The depressions in contrast to the crisis which have a sharper and more decisive, and in the period of pre-monopolistic (industrial) capitalism a less prolonged character, are characterized by prolonged, continuous stagnation in the affairs of commerce and industry.

The Political  
Order in En-  
gland at the  
End of the  
18th and the  
Beginning of the  
19th Century.

After the revolution of 1688 the parliamentary monarchy was definitely established in England. At the head of the state stood the king whose power was limited by parliament which consisted of two houses: the upper — the House of Lords and the lower — the House of Commons. The ministers were appointed by the king from among the leaders of the parties] which received a majority in parliament. Generally, the power alternated between the two parties — the party of Tories, the representatives of the landed aristocracy and of the provincial nobility, and the party of Whigs, also an aristocratic party, but closely connected with the upper strata of the commercial and financial bourgeoisie. The very composition of the ruling parties demonstrated the prevailing political influence in the country of the landed aristocracy. The landlords constituted the majority, not only in the upper, but also in the lower house. In their hands were concentrated all the most important military, civil, administrative and judicial positions. The landlords stood at the head of the municipal administration. The justices of peace and sheriffs were also from the ranks of the landlords.

The English landed aristocracy could well adjust itself to the capitalist development of the country. In its hands were concentrated wealth both in land and money. The aristocrats took part in the stock trading companies, and the colonial companies, and were also shareholders in the largest banks. With such conditions the domination of the landed aristocracy satisfied, to a certain extent, the old commercial and financial bourgeoisie. The interests of the latter were closely interwoven with the interests of the land owners (commercial monopolies, joint participation in the plundering of the colonies, the seizing of the peasant lands etc.). The aristocratic and the merchant banking families were as a rule closely related with one another. In the ranks of the nobility hundreds of families were descendant from the rich London merchants and bankers. Altogether different was the condition of the new industrial bourgeoisie. Having grown up and strengthened during the war with France, industrial capitalism began to realize more and more its own class interests. The policy of the aristocracy could no longer satisfy the demands of growing capitalism. The new «Corn Laws» of 1815 which guaranteed high rents to the landowners, and which burdened heavily the English working class, were also unprofitable and burdensome to the industrial bourgeoisie. For the manufacturers the corn tariff meant higher cost of production, and the inability to export to other lands in exchange for bread and raw materials for its own manufacturers. This worsened the conditions of English industry which was living through a heavy crisis after the war. The new bourgeoisie was forced to lead a stubborn struggle against the solidly entrenched power of the aristocracy. The bankrupt petty bourgeoisie also expressed deep dissatisfaction with the old political order. A still greater dissatisfaction with this order was felt in the ranks of the proletariat which was deprived of all political rights.

The dissatisfaction of the new classes with the old political system

was particularly clearly demonstrated in the struggle for parliamentary reforms. Beginning already in the seventies of the 18th century, it continued throughout the entire first half of the 19th century.

The English parliamentary electoral rights, created in the 18th century did not in any way correspond to the new groupings of the classes. The largest industrial cities and centres which arose as a result of the industrial revolution did not have the right to send their representatives into parliament, while the landed shires, once thickly populated, were now but thinly populated, various «rotter boroughs» i. e. boroughs which once were live commercial centres, and which as a result of changes in the economic geography of the country, had fallen to decay — sent to parliament dozens of representatives. Frequently «the rotten borough» was nothing more than a village with two or three houses and at times even these were absent, having been destroyed a long time before. In such cases the local land owner who was considered the proprietor of the borough would «elect» (all by himself) a deputy and would send him to parliament. Thanks to the «rotten boroughs» every duke and earl was represented in the lower house by at least a dozen obliging deputies, who were his henchmen and carried out his will. The enclosures, as we have seen, resulted in the disappearance of the English peasantry. The tenant farmers had no electoral rights and so the entire agricultural England was represented by the landlords. In the old cities which had the right to send deputies the domination of local big merchants and bankers prevailed. The mass of the city artisans and workers enjoyed no rights. In order to carry out its policy the bourgeoisie had first of all to take possession of parliament.

**The Revolutionary Movement in England in the Epoch of the Great French Revolution.**

The Great French Revolution found a warm response in England. Secret revolutionary societies were formed not only in England proper but also in other parts of the kingdom — of Scotland and Ireland. Some of these societies, as for instance those in Ireland, were of a national revolutionary character and arose as a result of the national oppression to which the English aristocracy and bourgeoisie subjected the population of Ireland. Other currents represented the so-called «constitutional societies» made up of left Whigs who took upon themselves the representation of the interests of the liberal industrial bourgeoisie. These societies set for themselves the aim of securing electoral parliamentary reform. They viewed the French Girondists as their ideal. And finally there were the democratic masses (the radical petty bourgeoisie, artisans, workers) who sympathized with the French Jacobins and were struggling for the general electoral rights and yearly parliaments and demanded that England should assist the French Revolution. The democratic movement at the end of the 18th century was on the whole concentrated around the so-called «correspondent societies». At the head of these correspondent societies stood the London correspondent society (1792—1795), the general secretary of which was Thomas Hardy an artisan worker. In 1792 and 1793 the correspondent societies were successful in calling in Edinburgh the main city in Scotland,

two conventions. The Convention of 1793 declared itself a convention of all the people of England, Scotland and Ireland, declared itself to be permanently in session and appealed to the masses for support. The government saw that the movement was pregnant with serious consequences. Only a short time before England had declared war against France. Under the pretext of being in a state of war, the Pitt government abolished all political liberties, dispersed the Edinburgh Convention, closed all the revolutionary clubs and correspondent societies, introduced a number of laws against the press and in this way openly established a dictatorship of the ruling classes.

The Anglo-French war began as a war against the Jacobin republic and dragged on for 22 years. It cost the country gigantic sums of money. The state debt of England on the eve of this war was about 290 million in 1815 and at the termination of the war it rose to 900 million sterling. The yearly interests alone on the national debt which had to be paid by the government amounted in 1816 to 32 million sterling. By subsidizing its allies, Prussia, Austria, Russia, by straining its entire colonial resources and utilizing the industrial development of the country, English capital finally achieved, at the price of great suffering of the people, a full victory over its competitor the French bourgeoisie, which had just thrown off the chains of feudalism. The people of England not only had to pay the military expenditures levied in the form of heavy taxes but also suffered severely from the high cost of living due to the continental blockade, as well as from the unemployment which resulted from the closing of most of the foreign markets to England during the war. Hence it is not surprising that the movement of the masses was continuous throughout the entire course of the war. In 1797 the whole of Ireland<sup>1</sup> was in revolt, depending for the assistance of the French republicans. At the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th century numerous workers' strikes took place, which brought about the laws of 1799. The «liberal» Tory government of Pitt ruthlessly suppressed all these movements. In striving to put an end to the revolution in Europe the English aristocracy attacked the revolutionary movement at home with even greater force.

**The Position of  
the liberal Bour-  
geoisie. The  
Agitation for  
Parliamentary  
Reform.**

Under the conditions of war and of the mass revolutionary movement the liberal industrial bourgeoisie rapidly renounced any sort of a decisive struggle against the aristocracy. The manufacturers and the shop owners understood only too well the danger of French competition and maintained during the war a friendly block (union) with the ruling classes.

Only with the termination of the war against France was the struggle of the industrial bourgeoisie for admission to power again renewed. The contradictions between the new bourgeoisie and the aristocracy became still further sharpened at that time. Having become accustomed during the war to high prices on grain, the landowners were not in any way inclined to lower them with the termination of

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<sup>1</sup> The overwhelming majority of landlords in Ireland were Englishmen, many of whom lived in England exploiting the Irish tenant peasants through their managers.

the war. With this purpose in view the so-called «Corn Laws» were carried through parliament in 1815, permitting the import of foreign grain into England only when corn prices in England rose to 82 shillings per quarter<sup>1</sup>. This measure was in fact equivalent to an almost complete prohibition of the import of foreign grain. The English and the Anglo-Irish landlords were in this way ensured a high rent. But on account of this, industrialists had to pay their workers a higher wage in order to provide them with some kind of a living minimum. But it was impossible to think of the cancellation of Corn Laws while parliament was entirely in the hands of the landlords. Consequently the question of suffrage reform arose before the bourgeoisie with all persistence.

Agitation for parliamentary reform was initiated with particular energy in the beginning of the twenties following the new rise of English industry. By this time England had already recovered a considerable part of the markets which she had lost during the war. In addition she had secured new markets in South America due to the transformation of the South American colonies into independent states.<sup>2</sup> The bourgeois radicals in their agitation for parliamentary reform strove to secure the support of the petty bourgeoisie and the workers. The working class of England in the first years of the 19th century represented a reasonably colourful picture. In the North appeared a great number of factory cadres of the proletariat, first in line being the cadres in the textile and mining industries. In the metallurgical industry with its centres in Sheffield and Birmingham, the workers predominated in centralized manufacture. In London and other old cities there existed a group of highly qualified mechanics. The rest of the proletariat was composed of domestic workers in «scattered manufacture», or workers employed by a «forestaller». A great number of the proletariat was composed of agricultural workers.

**The Labour Movement of the Twenties.**

After the war the labour movement continued to develop intensively. Strikes of factory workers were growing larger both in the number of participants as well as in the determination and stubbornness of the strikers. The workers did not limit themselves to the economic struggle alone but were putting forward also a number of political demands calling for the democratization of the political order. The government answered the movement of the workers with new repressions. When a large strike of textile workers took place in Lancashire in 1818 the government took measures to suppress severely the strike, arrested its organizers and put them on trial for holding membership in a illegal organization. In 1819 a bloody carnage took place on «St. Peter's field» near Manchester where police, jointly with troops, broke up a meeting of workers. Many of the workers were killed.

The movement of the workers, however, compelled the government to grant concessions. The law against coalitions was cancelled in

<sup>1</sup> Quarter — eight bushels, a fourth of a ton.

<sup>2</sup> The South American colonies were previously in the possession of Spain and Portugal. They became independent of their mother countries as a result of a number of revolts which took place from the end of the 18th century and continued until 1823.

1824. Secret trade union organizations came out into the open and began to grow rapidly. Hundreds of new trade unions were born. In almost every industrial locality, in every city local unions were formed. Following the example of the factory workers, the artisan workers also organized unions.

The strike movement acquired a more organized character under the leadership of the trade union organizations. More and more frequently strikes led to a victory for the workers.

In 1824 the Scottish miners struck for ten weeks and finally secured an increase in wages. The same results were obtained by the workers whose strike lasted for thirteen weeks. The Bradford workers in the cotton textile industry gained a victory over their bosses



The massacre of workers on Peter's field near Manchester (1819).

thanks to the assistance which they received from the workers in the woolen, textile and mining industries.

The crisis of 1825 which was followed by a depression in industry lasting up to the year of 1829, made it clear that the broken trade unions were not in a position to resist the employers who were lowering wages and closing their enterprises. Recognizing this, the workers began to strive toward the centralization of the trade union organization. Local trade unions were united into national unions or, at least, into district associations. In 1830 was created the «National Association for the Protection of Labour» which united the unions of the most varied trades: textile workers, shoe workers, metal workers, printers, builders, etc.

The number of members of the Association rapidly reached several thousands. The task of this new organization consisted in the securing of financial resources for the purpose of conducting defensive strikes. However, due to friction between the leaders of various unions, the association soon fell to pieces.

Notwithstanding individual defeats and organizational weaknesses, the movement of the English workers had already, towards the beginning of the thirties made great progress. It had reached the stage of an organized strike movement and the creation of trade unions, with ever more active participation in political struggle which, it is true, were still under the leadership of the radical bourgeoisie.

**Parliamentary Reform of 1832 and the Working Class.**

The July revolution of 1830 in Paris served as a new impetus to the movement for parliamentary reform. In striving for its aim the industrial bourgeoisie organized a special «Union of Struggle for Suffrage Reform». The most important of these was the Birmingham union which included in its ranks the middle and the petty bourgeoisie and a section of the workers. Another union, the so called «National Political Association» of workers and artisans was organized in London by a former worker-artisan, Place, who subsequently became a rich tailor. According to the plans of the radicals this union was to direct the beginning political struggle of the workers into channels benefiting the bourgeoisie. In the hands of the radicals the workers were to serve as a scarecrow against the aristocracy which was still stubbornly resisting any kind of parliamentary reform.

By securing support from the workers the bourgeoisie was finally successful in carrying out the reform. A split took place in the old aristocratic parties. The party of Whigs decided to take the initiative of the reform into its own hands in order to make it more moderate. The Tories remained. Part of them, headed, by the Duke of Wellington, continued to come out decisively against reform. But another section of the Tories was more moderate and joined the Whigs. Demonstrations of workers in London and the provinces frightened the lords with the prospective of revolution and compelled them, willy-nilly to grant concessions. The radicals from the left wings, who deep in their hearts feared the revolution most of all, were nevertheless speculating on the labour movement, declaring in parliament that in case of the rejection of the bill they would call the workers from the North to London.

However the «famous» reforms of 1832 glorified by the bourgeois historians were in reality very moderate. The reform was a compromise between the Whigs and the Tories, between the bourgeoisie and the land owners. It did not introduce general suffrage, but only slightly extended the circle of persons who enjoyed the right of suffrage. Where previously 435,000 people took part in the parliamentary elections, after the reform this number increased only to 662,000. The reform destroyed the rights of fifty-six «rotten bouroughs» with a population of less than 2,000 people, thirty other small cities with a population of less than 4,000 people elected only one deputy instead of two. The biggest part of the 143 parliamentary seats which were vacated in this manner were turned over to the new industrial cities (Manchester, Leeds, Birmingham, etc.). The new law established a single electoral qualification. In the agricultural localities every owner of real estate having an income of £10 sterling and tenant farmer with an income of £50 sterling had a right to vote. In the cities the right of suffrage was granted to all property owners and on houses with an income of not less than £10 sterling.



The bill of 1832 did not in any way help the position of the workers who had no political rights; the doors of the parliament remained as closed to their representatives as before. In this way that class of the population which, by its support, ensured the success of the reform, in reality received nothing from it. When the Whig project of the reform was published in 1831 already at that time the more advanced workers protested against its limitations. But the radicals seized with joy the concessions of the aristocrats and betrayed the workers. In spite of the meagerness of the reform of 1832 which was carried by the Whigs, it nevertheless gave the bourgeoisie the road to power. The manufactures and shop owners could now calculate that their voices would be heard in parliament and that they would be able to carry out the laws necessary for them.

The English workers were deceived. The bourgeoisie utilized them as a weapon for achieving their aims just as in the French revolution of 1830 the workers who fought against the government of the Bourbons only ensured the triumph of their enemy the bourgeoisie. In the «Communist Manifesto» Marx and Engels depicted this first stage of the political struggle of the workers in the following manner: «At this stage, therefore, the proletarians do not fight... their enemies, but the enemies of their enemies, the remnants of absolute monarchy, the landowners, the non-industrial bourgeois, the petty bourgeoisie. Thus the whole historical movement is concentrated in the hands of the bourgeoisie; every victory so obtained is a victory for the bourgeoisie.

The lessons of the struggle for parliamentary reforms of 1832 considerably helped the clarification of the class consciousness of the workers. The subsequent policy of the bourgeoisie which came to power still further aided in imbuing them with a consciousness of their own interests.

**The New Poor Law.** In 1834 the parliament elected on the basis of the law of 1832, passed a new Poor Law. Until that time the old law of the 16th century, in accordance with which relief for the poor was carried out by local church parishes was in force in England. According to this law, relief had to be given both to those unable to work as well as to those who received insufficient or who were entirely unemployed. The means for this purpose were secured through a special tax on the large and petty land owners. This law was brought about, on the one hand because of the horrifying growth of pauperization of the English population due to the agrarian revolution, and, on the other hand because it was advantageous for the landlords to keep the surplus labour power which could be utilized for agricultural work in the village.

However, the bourgeoisie considered this system of relief absolutely useless. It needed a reserve army for its shops and factories. In the North Western part of England in the period of the industrial revival toward the thirties, a shortage of labour hands was sharply felt. The destruction of the old form of relief to the poor was to accelerate the proletarianization of the handicraftsmen and drive the village paupers (the poor) into the shops and factories.

By the new law the work of relief for the poor was transferred from the old parish into the hands of special government commissars who placed the poor into the so-called work houses. The conditions of life in these houses were worse than in the penitentiary or in jail. Upon entering the work house the worker became a veritable prisoner. He had to wear a special costume which resembled a prison garb. Men lived in one section and women and children in another. Meeting with relatives was permitted only on good behaviour. Workers were virtually starved to death, being compelled to do from day to day monotonous, tiresome and absolutely unproductive work. Men broke heavy rocks while women and children picked oakum from tarred rope. No wonder that the workers preferred to starve to death rather than to enter one of these Bastilles for the poor. The bourgeoisie were satisfied. The expenses for the poor were rapidly curtailed. While in 1831 the expenses for the care of paupers reached six and half million pounds sterling in 1841 they were only four and a half million. But the working class met the new law with great indignation. In a number of places the workers attempted to smash the Bastille and retreated only before armed force. The Poor Law played a great rôle in the further rise of the workers' revolutionary movement.

**Robert Owen  
and his Influence  
on the  
Workers.**

The workers, convinced that the domination of the bourgeoisie as a result of the reforms of 1832 brought new hardships upon them, for a certain period of time became disappointed in the political struggle and concentrated their attention on the economic movement. The slogan of the eight hour working day with no reduction of pay became very popular. As one of the means of achieving this the slogan of the «Sacred Month», i. e. the general strike, was put forward. However the organization of such a strike encountered many obstacles. A number of trade unions which attempted to prepare it were smashed by the government. Then the basic mass of the factory workers began to feel the necessity of linking up their economic struggle with the political struggle against the ruling classes. The economic struggle attracted chiefly the artisan workers. Agitation of the English socialist, *Robert Owen*, was carried on just among these workers.



Robert Owen.

Owen was born in 1771 and died in 1858. A son of an artisan fur worker he had the possibility to become a manufacturer. He began his activity among the workers through philanthropy, i. e. he attempted to improve the conditions of his workers «by their benefactors» from above within the frame work of the capitalist order. He decreased the working day, organized schools for the children of the workers and built hospitals. However he was soon convinced that from among the manufacturers none were inclined to follow his example. On becoming closer acquainted with the worker's problems and convinced of the anarchistic character of the capitalist system, Owen became an Utopian Socialist. He proposed the organization of communistic communes. In these communes the productive force in his opinion would reach the highest development and then every inequality would disappear. «To divide riches, among individuals, in unequal portions, or to hoard it for individual purposes, will be perceived to be as useless and

as injurious, as it would be, to divide water or air into unequal quantities for different individuals, or that they should herd them for their future use». (*Robert Owen, The Book of the New Moral World* p. XI, published London — Effingham Wilson, Royal Exchange).

Owen attempted to realize his teachings in practice. His adherents organized a Communistic commune in America. In England itself Owen organized so-called «barter markets» to which the artisans gave the products of their labour and received in turn articles of necessity, avoiding in this way the capitalist market. And finally Owen had an idea of uniting the cooperative movement with the trade union organization. On his initiative a congress of delegates of various trade union organizations took place in London in 1834 which laid the foundation of the «Grand National Consolidate Trade Unions». The final aim of the new «union of unions» was declared to be «an absolute liberation of workers from the tyranny of capital». The trade unions were to organize consumers and producers' cooperatives and also to buy plots of land to provide for their members in the event of unemployment. However due to the differences of the Owenites and the leaders of the trade unions as well as the persecution by the manufacturers who refused to employ the members of the union, the latter soon fell to pieces.

Owen was an utopian socialist who rejected the class struggle and the revolutionary method of struggle. He was opposed to the capture of power by the working class. He even considered strikes as an unacceptable method of struggle. The teachings of Owen, while finding a response among the workers and artisans who hoped to find in the artel the defence against big capital, on the other hand, found no broad influence over the masses of the factory proletariat.

The new wave of the economic crisis of 1836-37 the poor harvests of 1838 and 1839, stirred the working masses and directed them along the line of broad political struggle.

## § 16. Chartistism.

### The Inception of the Chartist Movement.

The crisis of 1836-37 created mass unemployment among the factory workers, artisans and at the same time forced into bankruptcy many small bosses from the ranks of the petty bourgeoisie. On the basis of the broad dissatisfaction of the toiling masses the bourgeois radicals began anew their propaganda for the further extension of the suffrage rights. The reform of 1832 was now considered insufficient by the radicals, inasmuch as it was still impossible through it to achieve the cancellation of the grain duties which constituted the main point of the liberal programme. The radicals intended to repeat once again, the experience of 1831-32. The workers took up the demand for the extension of the suffrage rights, but in their struggle for political rights they went much beyond the limits which were placed before them by the radicals.

In 1836 the worker-artisans founded the «London Working Men's Association» at the head of which stood *William Lovett*, a London carpenter. The new organization was distinguished by the extreme moderation in its views.

According to Lovett, the immediate task of the Association consisted in the «unification of the intelligent and the most influential section of the working class in order to achieve by all lawful means equal political and social rights for all the classes of society» (retranslated from the Russian). The association was connected with the radicals. Plase himself was acting in this organization.

In 1837 Lovett in the name of the association drew up a petition to parliament which included six points of the democratic programme: 1. Universal suffrage for all adult men, 2. Annual re-election of Parliament, 3. Salaries for members of Parliament, 4. Secret ballot, 5. Equal electoral districts, and 6. The abolition of property qualifications for members of the House of Commons. These demands received the name of the charter from which originated also the name of the movement — *Chartism*. In 1838 the charter in the form of a bill was circulated by the association throughout England.

In spite of the moderation of the London chartists, the charter, as a political programme, demonstrated the striving of the workers to capture political power for the purpose of economic liberation.

The slogans of the «charter» were taken up by a mass of the factory workers from the north who organized the «Big Northern Union». The movement immediately assumed gigantic proportions. Numerous meetings were attended by tens, and at times by hundreds of thousand of workers many of whom were armed. Signatures collected for the petition to parliament reached 1,250,000. In an industrial centre, Leeds, the workers collected money with which they began to publish a chartist newspaper «The Northern Star». The slogan of calling a chartist convention was put forward. Deputies began to be elected at the meetings.

In February 1839 the national convention of the Chartist deputies assembled in London, they had to work out measures for carrying the Charter into life. Within a short period of time the Chartist movement embraced the entire working class of England.

#### The Struggle of the Currents within Char- tism.

However, in the beginning, the Chartist movement was very varied in its composition. Alongside of the workers in this movement participated also the petty bourgeoisie and even «fellow travellers» from the ranks of the ruling classes. Thus, for instance, in Birmingham a strong group of radical bourgeoisie with the banker Attwood at the head penetrated the ranks of the Chartists trying to utilize the movement for the purpose of bourgeois reform. A section of the aristocratic Tories who hated the bourgeoisie, also considered themselves as the «defenders of the workers». The English church, just as the aristocracy, hastened forward in order not to lose the opportunity of presenting themselves in the rôle of leaders of the «poor». Particularly prominent among the agitators of the clergy was *Stephens*, who talked upon the workers to resort to violent action against the oppressors, while in reality he attempted to return to «the good old times» of pre-capitalist relations. These people according to Marx «were waving the beggar's scrip as a banner in order to get the people around themselves». The aristocracy pointed out that under its domination the



Lovett.

proletariat was not in existence. It charged the bourgeoisie with the fact that under its domination a class had developed which would blow up into the air the existing order. For this reason it called the workers back to those times when there was yet no proletariat. The clergymen also preached the same thing to the workers. «In the same way» states Marx, «as the priest had always lived hand in hand with the feudal lords so also the socialism of the priests went along with feudalism». All of these «fellow-travellers» fell aside with the development of the Chartist movement and to the extent that the movement was developing, it was becoming more homogeneous and proletarian. But the English proletariat itself was not homogeneous in the first half of the 19th century. The workers in the factory industry, the workers in the manufacture, the worker-artisans, the agricultural workers and the masses of impoverished handicraftsmen and peasants who had joined the workers, differed sharply from one another by the various level of development of their class consciousness. Petty bourgeois sentiments were very strong even among some of the factory workers who had only recently broken away from small scale production.



O'Connor.

In an address to the Political and Social Reformers of the United Kingdom Lovett said:

«First, as regards the best means of obtaining our Charter, we are of those who are opposed to everything in the shape of a physical or violent revolution, believing that a victory would be a defeat to the real principles of democracy. We think that all that is necessary for the carrying of that measure is, soberly and rationally, to convince all classes of our population how far it is their interest to unite with us, in order

that we may peaceably obtain it, for a combined people have always numerous means for the attainment of their object without violence.»

This group of the adherents of «moral force» was energetically opposed by the advocates of «physical force», leaders of the workers of the industrial north. *O'Brien, O'Connor and Harney* insisted on a decisive struggle against the government including the application of armed force. At one of the London meetings, O'Connor expressed himself in the following manner: «The people have too long and humbly suffered oppression... I advise them (the masses) not to resort either to uprisings or to civil struggle, nevertheless I will say, — and let this be heard by the House of Commons, — that if the people will be further oppressed, if the constitution will be violated, if the people will live in constant need, then, if no one else would dare to do that, I myself will lead the people to death or glory... It is better to die free than to live a slave!» (retranslated from the Russian).

But this same O'Connor was a determined opponent of communism. «I was», he stated in another place, «and I think will remain forever an opponent of communism... Communism destroys healthy competition.

By healthy competition O'Connor understood capitalist competition. «Only private property and labour collaboration create healthy ties between all classes of society... I stand for the principle: 'mine' and 'yours'» (retranslated from the Russian). O'Connor particularly strongly reflected the petty bourgeois sentiment of the workers, the former Irish peasants who hoped to return to their land and again become small proprietors.

Marx wrote about him: «O'Connor is an Irish squire pretending to the name of the descendant of an ancient king of Munster. In spite of his origin and political direction he is a true representative of old England. By his entire nature he is conservative and nourishes very definite hatred towards industrial progress as well as towards the revolution. All of his ideals are thoroughly saturated with the patriarchal and petty bourgeois spirit. He combines within himself an inexpressible mass of contradictions which find their solution and harmony in a certain simple common sense giving him an opportunity to write year after year his longest weekly letters to the «Northern Star», and at that, as a rule, every one of his new letters is in a distinct contradiction to the preceding one. It is just because of this that O'Connor considers himself the most consistent person in all the three kingdoms, who in the course of twenty years predicted all events. His broad shoulders, his lion's voice, his exceptional skill in boxing, thanks to which he once held the Nottingham Market from a crowd of more than 20,000 people — all of this is characteristic for a representative of old England. It is clear that a man like O'Connor must be a great hindrance to the revolutionary movement. But such people are useful just for the fact that jointly with them and in them disappears the mass of the deep-rooted prejudices and that their movement when it finally conquers these people, frees itself once and for all from the prejudices which they represent.»

The socialist viewpoint of another representative of the left wing, O'Brien, did not excel in any great class clarity either. O'Brien saw the contradictory interests of the different classes of the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie on the one hand, and the workers and toiling masses on the other hand.

He appears a convinced opponent to private property. «The masses must become the owners of the land and machines instead of being themselves machines at the disposal of scoundrels who gradually grasp now this, and now that.» But O'Brien just the same did not understand the historical rôle of the proletariat.

Marx names *Ernest Jones and Harney* as representatives of the interests of the mass of the factory — the shop proletariat. Harney warned the workers against union with the bourgeois parties. Julian Harney stated: «Base hypocritical and assassin like they will join the movement only to divide it... Whatever the middle classes have ever taken into hand has turned out to the people's cost to be delusive and fraudulent; therefore, if the producing classes intend to regenerate their country, they must rely on themselves and on themselves alone.» (Retranslated from the Russian).

In London Harney organized «the Democratic Association» which in 1838 split away from the Lovetts «London Association». The final aim of the democratic association was expressed in a quite obscure manner — the destruction of inequality and the establishment of general happiness. But Harney had developed a minimum programme for the workers which included the demand for the eight hour working day, the prohibition of child labour, the annulment of the Poor Laws, for the legalization of trade unions, the freedom of the press, general elementary education, etc.

**The First Stage  
of the Chartist  
Movement The  
Convention of  
1839.**

The Chartist movement is divided into three periods: 1837-39, 1841-42 and 1847-48. Above we have already pointed out the rapid development of the mass movement which marched under the slogan of the «charter» in the year 1837—1838.

On February 4th, 1839 the first Chartist National Convention of the toiling classes consisting of fifty-three delegates opened in London. From the very beginning heated discussion took place in the convention on the question of tactics. The representatives of the «London association» and the adherents of Attwood argued against forceful measures and considered the propaganda of the charter as well as carrying it through in parliament through an agreement with the radical members of the house as its main task. The left section of the convention — O'Connor, Harney, raised the question of exerting revolutionary pressure («the pressure from without») of the masses on parliament. They carried on great activity outside of the convention organizing in London and particularly in the industrial centres, large meetings at which the workers were called to give revolutionary support to the convention, in the event, that Parliament would reject the Charter.

In order to be closer to the masses, the lefts proposed to transfer the sessions of the convention to the north. This proposal was accepted but Birmingham was chosen as the seat of the convention — which, although an industrial city, was not as yet at that time a centre of large industry. As a measure of pressure on Parliament, a decision was adopted by the convention (in Birmingham May 14th), that in the event that the petition should fail, to call upon the depositors to withdraw their savings from the banks and for the workers to begin a «Sacred Month», i. e. the general strike.

However this measure appeared too «revolutionary» to the adherents of «moral force» and most of them abandoned the sessions of the convention.

In the meantime the presentation of the petition was being delayed. Attwood, who was a member of parliament and who had promised to introduce the petition, recommended the collection of additional signatures. The convention interrupted its work for a month and a half; its members again carried on local agitation for the collection of additional signatures. Such a tactic was clearly wrong. When the convention assembled again on July 15th the government, having convinced itself by that time of the indecisiveness and disputes in the ranks of its leaders, had taken the offensive itself. It decided to provoke an armed uprising in Birmingham in order to drown it in blood. Troops and police were drawn toward Birmingham. All meetings were prohibited. The convention, suspecting the provocation, transferred its sessions back to London. Nevertheless, the government achieved its aim. A peaceful crowd of Birmingham workers was attacked by troops and many of the leaders were arrested (Lovett, Collins). The workers responded by resisting the troops, breaking into shops and resorting to incendiarism. Three days later the troops and police suppressed the uprising which they themselves had provoked. The Birmingham events found a reflection in other cities. In Newcastle, Glasgow and



a number of other places stormy meetings of workers took place which ended in bloody encounters with the police. But the convention which renewed its sessions in London July 10 was not able to utilize the militant sentiment of the workers for the purpose of organizing a general armed uprising.

In seeing this, the parliament, which previously procrastinated in the matter of reviewing the petition, now took courage and rejected the chartist petition almost unanimously (July 12th, 1839). By a decision of the convention the general strike was set for August 1st. This brought about objections from the side of the adherents of «moral» force. Then on July 22nd the convention annulled this decision and appointed a committee to study the situation postponing its session until August. It met at the end of August and decided to disband. These waverings and indecisiveness of the convention struck a blow to the movement. The movement began to decline. The Chartists were subjected to brutal persecution. About 450 Chartists, and among them all the most prominent leaders, were arrested. The attempt to realize the «sacred month» (the general strike) was unsuccessful. The revival of industry which began in the second half of 1839 facilitated the curtailment of unemployment and with this also lowered the level of the movement.

The defeat of 1839, however, had one positive feature: it had to a considerable extent freed itself from its bourgeois «fellow travellers». The Birmingham radicals found that it was too dangerous for them to participate in the movement. Stephens, having been arrested and having served a prison sentence, also deserted Chartism, apologizing for his «mistake». In fact Lovett also deserted Chartism. After his arrest in the summer of 1839 and 2 year prison sentence he refused to participate in political struggles. He returned to his old «cultural» preaching about organizing schools for workers as the best method to obtain alleviation of their conditions.

The movement, however, was not discouraged by the failure of 1839. The bitter experience of defeat, taught the Chartists, that they would never attain their objective, unless they strengthened their own organizations, and created a real party. Out of separate circles and groups at the Conference of the Chartists in Manchester in 1840, a national Chartist party («The National Chartist Association») was organized. This was the first workers' political party with elected organs (Executive Committee and Local Council) and with definite organizational forms (the collection of membership dues, membership cards, party conferences and conventions). Within two years the number of members had reached 40,000.

**The Movement  
of 1842. The  
Second Petition.**

In 1841—1842, which was a year of bad harvest, a new crisis began which served as an impetus for the new rise of the Chartist movement. By this time, many of the Chartist leaders had been released from jail, among them O'Connor, who had served the term of imprisonment and had again taken up revolutionary work. The Executive Committee of the Party drew up a new petition. This petition was signed by about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  million people. This second petition of 1842 differed considerably from the petition of 1839. The first pe-

tion, except for the putting forward of the political programme and the six points of the Charter, dealt very little with the social economic demands and, where it did advance some of these, it had in view not only the workers but also the bosses — the petty and even the big bourgeoisie. Thus for example in this petition one could read: «We are bowed down under a load of taxes, which, notwithstanding, fall greatly short of the wants of our rulers; our traders are trembling on the verge of bankruptcy; our workmen are starving; capital brings no profit, and labour no remuneration; the home of the artisan is desolate and the warehouse of the pawnbroker is full; the workhouse is crowded, and the manufactory is deserted.»

The petition of 1842 had already a much more steadfast proletarian character. It contained a number of points depicting the miserable position of the working class, the brutality of the new Poor Law, starvation wages, the prolonged «beyond human endurance» working day, the yoke of indirect taxes, which fell mainly upon the working masses. In speaking about the miserable wages of the workers the petition very aptly compares this income ( $3\frac{3}{4}$ ,  $2\frac{3}{4}$  an even 2 pence a day) with the daily income of Queen Victoria amounting to 197 pounds 17 shillings and 6 pence a day with income of her husband Prince Albert who received 57 pounds, 10 shillings a day and the salary of the Bishop of Canterbury — 52 pounds, 10 shillings a day.

In raising the question of the reasons for these social misfortunes the authors of the petition attributed it to the capitalist monopolies.

Petition of 1842: «Your petitioners deeply deplore the existence of any kind of monopoly in this nation, — and your petitioners respectfully mention the existing monopolies of the suffrage, of paper money, of machinery, of land, of the public press, of means of travelling and transit, of religious worship, and of a host of other evils too numerous to mention.» (Retranslated from the Russian.) These monopolists in the opinion of the Chartists cannot be destroyed unless the people take the power.

In this way the petition of 1842 is in many respects a conscious revolutionary-proletarian document. It is not surprising, therefore, that when it was under discussion in Parliament, the representatives of the ruling classes were in a rage. «It is impossible to read the petition calmly,» declared Macaulay, member of parliament who spoke at the discussion of the Petition on May 2, 1842: «The petitioners ask for supreme power; in every constituent body throughout the empire, capital and accumulated property is to be placed absolutely at the feet of labour.» («History of British Socialism,» M. Beer, Vol. II, p. 136; retranslated from the Russian).

On April 12th, 1842, the second Chartist Convention assembled in London. On May 2nd it presented the petition to Parliament which rejected it the same as the first petition. The stubbornness of Parliament awoke new protest of the workers which found its expression in stormy meetings and the strike movements.

The bourgeoisie decided to utilize the excitement of the workers in order to achieve with its assistance the cancellation of the Corn Laws and at the same time to distract the attention of the proletariat from the political

**The August  
Strike of 1842.**

struggle. In experiencing the difficulties resulting from the crisis of 1841—42, the bourgeoisie itself facilitated the extension of the strike movement hoping to frighten the landed aristocracy and force from it concessions. For this purpose the manufacturers declared a lockout. But the mass strike movement which began as an answer to this lockout immediately extended beyond the limits which were set for it by the bourgeoisie. The striking workers demanded not the cancellation of grain tariffs but the raising of wages and the enactment of the Charter into a law. The movement spread over Manchester and all other northern industrial shires. The workers maintained strict discipline. Ever new districts were joining the strike. It seemed that the «sacred month» was to be realized in practice.

But the leaders of the Chartists were themselves taken unawares by the strike and organized it poorly. The Southern shires and London did not participate in the strike at all. In the meantime the frightened manufacturers hastened to call out the troops and repressions were showered upon the strikers. Soon the strike wave began to subside and the struggles of the workers ended in a defeat. In this way the weakness of organization and the unpreparedness of the leaders were exposed in the second period of the movement.

**Chartists in the  
Period of  
1842—1847.**

The defeat of the general strike in August 1842 meant the smashing anew of the Chartist movement. The government again began arrests and court trials of the Chartist leaders charging them with propaganda for the general strike. The working masses were disappointed. The membership of the Chartist Party fell rapidly from 40,000 to 3 to 4,000 people.

The decline of the movement was facilitated by the new rise of industry which continued from the end of 1842 to 1847. Part of the workers left the political struggle for the co-operative movement. The trade unions were entering ever more on the path of the economic struggle alone. Sections of the workers followed the Tory leaders who promised the workers to force from the bourgeoisie a number of laws pertaining to form protection of labour. And in reality, in 1844 a very important law was passed limiting the labour of miners to 10 hours a day, and in 1847 a 10 hour working day was introduced also for women, which, in fact, affected also men working with them. A short time earlier the liberals were successful in securing in Parliament the cancellation of the Corn Laws (in 1846) which facilitated a certain decrease in the prices of bread and other food products.

In spite of these circumstances which had a demoralizing effect on Chartism, the movement was far from being dead. O'Connor and O'Brien attempted during this period to interest the workers in land projects. In 1845 O'Connor came out with a plan for establishing a special agricultural settlement. It was proposed to establish a special stock company whose share-holders would be workers. With the money collected on the shares (one share was valued from £2 to £5 sterling) were to be purchased estates, which divided into small plots, would be turned over to the share-holders for the payment of a small rent. A short time later the estate which would increase in value thanks to the intensive cultivation by the workers was to be mortgaged. With

the mortgage money, plus the new shares new lands were to be purchased etc. until all the workers would be returned to agricultural economy. The plan was clearly phantastic and in practice suffered a complete failure. Although the subscription brought in about £ 100,000 sterling with which a few estates were purchased, the stock company failed and O'Connor himself lost his entire personal fortune in it. O'Connor's plan was not only utopian but also reactionary. The propaganda to return the workers to the land, which enjoyed success among the former peasants and a section of the artisans distracted the workers from their class revolutionary struggle and obscured their class consciousness.

O'Brien who criticized O'Connor's plans, was himself developing another problem, — the nationalization of the land which was to be carried out by the State and which would pay the owners a certain compensation.

Another utopian project which O'Brien advanced to the workers was the proposal for the organization of a barter market, which he borrowed from Owen, and which also lured the workers along the wrong path. In this way O'Brien was turning along the reformist path which contradicted his earlier revolutionary principles.

**«The Society of Fraternal Democrats».**

In contrast to these petty bourgeois views of the most prominent leaders of Chartism, a revolutionary proletarian movement was ever more clearly discerned in the Chartist movement of this period. At the head of this movement stood Harney, mentioned above in connection with the «Democratic Association» in London, and his friend, *Ernest Jones* (1819—1869), a revolutionary poet who spent several years in jail for participation in the revolutionary movement. In 1845 Harney organized the international «Society of Fraternal Democrats» into which, in addition to the Chartists, entered the representatives of London Revolutionary emigrés — Germans, Italians, Poles, etc.

In 1847 Marx, while attending the Congress of the Communist League in London, participated in the meeting of the Fraternal Democrats. At this meeting it was decided to create in the following year, 1848, an International Congress of Democrats-Communists. Due to the revolution which began in Europe in 1848 the proposed Congress did not take place. But after 1848 Marx and Engels who settled in England established close connections with Harney as well as with Jones exerting on both of them (particularly on Jones) a great influence and facilitating the development of their views in the direction leading to the theory of scientific Communism.

**The Third Stage of the Chartist Movement.**

The periodic crisis of 1847 stirred up anew the working masses and caused the new (third) rise of the Chartist movement. Already in the Spring of 1847 the Lancashire manufacturers began to lower wages. The workers retaliated with stormy strikes which were suppressed by troops. Many of the factories were completely closed down others worked part time. In Manchester proper, of 40,000 workers only 18,000 worked a full week. Unrest was rising among the unemployed. The news of the revolution on the continent of Europe — in France and in Germany — introduced a still greater revival of the movement. It

seemed that in England also the revolution was to break out. The Charter was again put forward at a meeting, but this time it included the demand for a republic. Just as in the preceding years signatures were collected for the petition and reached 5 million. A third Convention of the chartists assembled in London, on April 4th, 1848.

However the movement this time also ended in a failure. The new Convention repeated the mistakes of its predecessor. The Convention was poorly connected with workers of the major industrial centres. It manifested waverings and indecisiveness in the leadership of the movement. Harney and Jones proposed to call the workers to decisive action, but the old leaders O'Connor, O'Brien and others did not believe in the success of revolutionary methods and finally the Convention limited itself to the adoption of an indefinite resolution which declared that in the event of Parliament rejecting the petition, the Chartists would call a new session; this session to present a report to the Queen demanding the disbanding of Parliament and the appointment of a new Ministry which would be obliged to carry the Charter through the new Parliament.

It was decided to present the petition to parliament on April 10th, 1848 and to organize a big demonstration. Agitation was started. Behind the back of the wavering Convention the extreme left leaders of the Chartists called for an armed uprising (Jones). But while the Convention wavered, the Government acted decisively and without any waverings. It hastily carried through parliament a special law for the protection of Queen and government, addressing a proclamation to the population, proposing to it not to participate in the chartist demonstration, and prepared armed forces.

Big military forces were drawn to London; special detachments of volunteers were formed recruited from the ranks of the bourgeoisie to reinforce the police. The Chartists, not feeling the support of the masses of the population of the petty bourgeoisie in London behind them cancelled the proposed for April 10th demonstration. The petition, weighing 1260 pounds was loaded on three waggons and delivered by the drivers to Parliament where it was met with ridicule and almost unanimously rejected. The day of April 10th, 1848 was the day of the greatest crash of the Chartist movement.

#### **The Chartist Movement in the Beginning of the Fifties.**

After the defeat of 1848 Chartism did not at once cease its existence. However since that time Chartism experienced no new decisive rise. The conditions of the fifties further facilitated decomposition in the ranks of the Chartists and the decline of revolutionary sentiments among a considerable section of the English proletariat. After 1847-1848 England entered into a long period of industrial prosperity. The completion of the industrial revolution placed English industry in the first place in the world trade, which could not be challenged either by France or Germany who were economically much weaker. English capital monopolized the world market. In its hands were concentrated not only the best European but also the Asiatic and American markets. The discovery of gold fields in California and Australia still further facilitated the successes of English trade and industry.

Under the new conditions of prosperity of English capitalism the majority of the old leaders left the movement. The leadership of the workers which remained true to Chartism, passed to Harney and Jones. They both made energetic efforts to revive the movement and reconstruct the Chartist organization. Marx and Engels helped them by their advice and directions. The creation of a strong, of a truly proletarian Party based upon the industrial proletariat, — this was, in the conception of Marx and Engels, the thing which could still save the Chartist movement.

In 1853—1854, taking advantage of the renewed strike movement in the industrial districts of the North, Jones started quite successfully an agitation for the creation of a mass proletarian Chartist organization. On his initiative in March 1854 a special congress of workers' delegates took place in Manchester which took the name «Workers' Parliament» — in contrast to the «Parliament of the Rich» which was in session in London. However, the Workers' Parliament, instead of actually organizing the Party, as was recommended to it by Marx in his letter, busied itself with a cooperative plan. Shortly afterwards the strike wave subsided and Chartism finally began to decline. In this way the task of the reorganization of Chartism was beyond the forces of Harney and Jones. With the receding of the revolutionary wave they finally became disappointed in the movement and descended to the path of agreement with the Liberals. On this basis Marx was even forced to break with Jones in 1858. Already at the end of 1853 Harney had virtually dropped from political life.

**The Causes for  
the Decline of  
Chartism in the  
Fifties.**

The defeat of Chartism, and its subsequent replacement in England by reformist bourgeois trade unionism is explained by the changes within the English proletariat. The monopoly of English industry on the world market created for the English bourgeoisie the possibility, of improving the position of the skilled upper strata of the working class.

The wages of skilled workers of the basic professions grew considerably in comparison with the forties. Thus for instance in 1850 the labourer received 18 shillings a week, in 1860 — 20 shillings, in 1865 — 30 shillings; the wages of the weaver rose from 13 to 16 shillings. The carpenter earned in 1840—20 shillings, in 1860 — he already receives 25 shillings, the building workers instead of 15.5 shillings began to receive 17 shillings. The moulders received in 1845 22.5 shillings in a week, and in 1855 and later — 28 shillings. 186 21

This skilled section of workers could now better satisfy its requirements in food, clothing and housing. It was becoming a kind of «aristocracy of labour» in comparison with the other unqualified, poorly paid workers. «The aristocracy of labour» was now already saturated with bourgeois sentiments. One of the old Chartists thus described the changes in the sentiments of these workers. «In our old Chartist time thousands of Lancashire workers went around ragged in old clothing, and many of them were frequently hungry. But their intelligence was demonstrated no matter where you went. You could see them standing in groups discussing the great teaching of political justice, of how every adult of sound mind must have a voice in the

election of people for the passing of laws, to which he would submit, or they would carry on some kind of serious dispute on the teaching of Socialism. Now you will not see such groups in Lancashire. But you will see well-dressed workers who are walking with hands in their pockets, talking about their co-operatives, and about their shares in these co-operatives or in the building associations.» The trade unions which only the skilled workers joined were carrying on economic struggles for the daily needs of the workers without at all raising the question of the final aim, — the destruction of capitalism. In observing the defeat of Chartism, Marx and Engels explained this by the split of the working class, the promotion of the «aristocracy of labour», «bribed» by the bourgeoisie at the expense of its super-profit. In 1858 Engels wrote to Marx: «The English proletariat has virtually become ever more and more bourgeoisified so that this, the most bourgeois of all nations, apparently wishes in the final analysis to have alongside with the bourgeoisie, the bourgeois aristocracy and the bourgeoisified proletariat... For a nation which exploits the entire world this in reality is to a certain degree natural.» Engels, of course, had here in view not the entire mass of the English proletariat but only its upper strata. In «Capital» Marx gave a most clear picture of the desperate need of the poorly paid section of the working class in the same England in the fifties and sixties, in the years of its industrial revival. But this impoverished mass of unqualified workers was unorganized and entered the revolutionary movement at a much later period.

**The Historic  
Significance  
and Lessons of  
Chartism.**

Chartism played a great rôle in the history of the international working class movement. *It was the first independent movement of the proletariat as a class against the entire bourgeois order. The chartist movement was «the first broad, truly mass movement, with definite political forms — a proletarian-revolutionary movement» (L e n i n).* The entire English working class participated in Chartism. «Chartism», wrote Engels, «is the compact form of the opposition against the bourgeoisie. In the unions and turnouts (strikes) opposition always remained isolated: it was single workmen or sections who fought individual bourgeois... But in Chartism it is the whole working class which arises against the bourgeoisie and attacks, first of all, the political power, the legislative rampart with which the bourgeoisie has surrounded itself.»

*Though the Chartists did not have a clear conception about it, the final aim of the Chartist movement was Socialism as opposed to capitalism.*

Of particular value in the Chartist movement was the combination of the political and the economic struggle. Chartism helped to show the broad masses of the proletariat that the bourgeois suffrage rights and bourgeois parliamentarism are aids to the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. The Chartists understood all the importance of the utilization of political power by the proletariat for its liberation from the yoke of capital. They were also the first in the history of the labour movement who commenced the creation of a workers' Party, separate and independent from the bourgeois parties.



And, finally, Chartism as a proletarian movement was international in its very essence. It is not by accident that the «fraternal democrats» attempted to establish living connections with the workers of other countries.

The subsequent labour movement utilized the experience of the Chartist movement. At the present time the Communist International urgently recommends to English Communists to study the history of Chartism. «It is impermissible that the English Communists should not be trained at this period in respect for Chartism and that they should not know the most important documents of «Chartism» (from the plenum of the Communist International theses about bolshevization). The international proletariat in studying the history of Chartism will take into account at the same time also the shortcomings of the Chartist movement. The unclear conception about the final aims of the workers' movement — about Socialism, the petty bourgeois reactionary sentiments («back to the land», — «to small holdings»), the inability of the leaders to give a correct direction to the revolutionary energy of the masses, in order to strike a decisive blow at the class enemy, the striving to take power into their hands by «legal methods» (by means of petitions, etc.), overestimation of the significance of general suffrage rights, — all of these facts testify to the still insufficient maturity of the working class of that time. *The necessity for the proletariat to have a strong, truly proletarian party guided by a correct revolutionary theory — such is the basic lesson of chartism.*

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## CHAPTER IV.

### THE SOCIAL-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND THE CLASS STRUGGLE IN FRANCE IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE 19th CENTURY.

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#### § 17. The Epoch of Reaction. The Restoration of the Bourbons.

**The Reaction of the Landlords:** The throne was restored in France by the bayonets of the allies and on it was placed Louis the 18th, the brother of the executed Louis the 16th, a member of the same family of Bourbons, which had oppressed France over a period of several centuries. The landlord bourgeois reaction, covered up by the constitution which to some extent limited the power of the King through the bourgeois-landlord Legislative Assembly set in France. It consisted of two Houses. The members of the Upper House were appointed by the King from the ranks of the nobility. Only large property owners had a right to be elected into the Lower House. Out of the 30 million population of France only 100,000 of the largest landowners and financial magnates had the right of suffrage. The House of Deputies elected by them was called by the King «incomparable», because it corresponded to such an extent to his desires and to that of the courts, nobility.

Together with the Bourbons the numbers of nobility, Catholic priests and Jesuits who fled abroad during the revolution returned to France. They were burning with the desire to return to the old order, to the lands confiscated during the revolution. All of them demanded reward for themselves «for fidelity to the king» and expected from him pensions, titles and profitable positions. During half a year over 2,500 emigrés thus «fixed themselves.» For their advantage was created a special king's guard of 6,000 people the maintenance of which cost over 20 million francs yearly. The nobility took up the leading positions in the State apparatus and the commanding posts in the Army. On the insistent demands of the nobility they were returned that section of the land confiscated from them during the revolution, which still remained unsold.

With the coming of the Bourbons a wave of white terror spread throughout the country. The returning emigrés organized regular pogroms in the Southern part of France directed against the owners of the nationalized property. Extraordinary laws were passed in the House; throughout the whole of France extraordinary courts operated, which condemned all those accused of revolutionary activity.

In spite of all the efforts of the priests and the emigrés it was impossible to restore the old order in France. In spite of the fact that the throne was restored in France, France in no way resembled the old pre-revolutionary France. The changes brought about by the revolu-

tion of the 18th century were so great that they could not be destroyed. The feudal order was destroyed, and bourgeois capitalist society was developing.

Even the Bourbons understood that an attempt to take away the former lands of the nobility from the great number of their present owners would mean a new revolution which would cost them the throne. Even under the Bourbons in the epoch of the reactionary rule of the landlords the basic gains of the bourgeois revolution were preserved in France; equality of all before the law, the freedom of trade and industrial activity, the destruction of feudal dependence duties. The code of Napoleon, which formulated the social gains of the bourgeois revolution, was also preserved. The emigré nobility were, however, successful in securing the payment of one billion francs as a compensation for the lands taken away from them during the revolution.

**The Dissatisfaction of the Peasants and of the Bourgeoisie.**

It can be understood how *French peasantry*, in whose well-to-do strata there were many owners of the former lands of the nobility, hated the returned nobility.

The constant growth of indirect taxation which had fallen on the shoulders of the toilers was also raising the sharp dissatisfaction of the people and a section of the peasantry which constituted the basic section of population of France at that time. The nobility was also hated by a broad strata of the *French bourgeoisie*. High tariffs on the import of grain were instituted for the advantage of the landlords. For this reason the prices on bread in France were very high and the manufacturers were forced to increase the wages of workers. In order to pay the billion francs compensation to the emigrants the funds had to be made up by lowering the interest paid by the State on the loans. The main holders of these banks were the bourgeoisie and this measure strongly affected its pockets.

The Bourbons refused to carry on the struggle with English industry for the supremacy on the European market.

In accordance with the agreement of 1814 the import of foreign commodities was permitted in all French colonies with the small payment of only 2% duty. In reality it meant the turning over of the French colonial markets to the English.

The high tariff duties established on the import into France of English cast-iron, and iron and steel articles were advantageous only to the owners of the large steel mills in France who took over from England the method of smelting iron with coal, while the broad circles of the industrial bourgeoisie had to overpay big sums on the import of English machines and tools which were not produced in France.

At the same time, despite the fact that the speed of capitalist development of France was retarded, nevertheless French industry was undergoing an industrial revolution which stretched out over many long years. Here also the machine was driving out hand labour; French industry although very slowly was nevertheless going over from manufacture to factory production.

With the development of French industry, continued also the development of the industrial bourgeoisie. Nevertheless, the basic mass of this bourgeoisie was entirely removed from political life. No wonder that dissatisfaction was growing in the ranks of the bourgeoisie.

**The Condition  
of the Working  
Class.**

Alongside with the growth of the industrial bourgeoisie the proletariat was also developing in France. In addition to the artisan workers of France cadres of factory proletariat were also being created.

Thus, in the Northern districts towards the end of the epoch of restoration the number of workers already exceeded 100,000 and in the district of the Upper Rhine there were up to 20,000 workers occupied in the textile industry. The condition of the workmen in the epoch of Restoration was very hard. In connection with the replacement of hand labour by machine, in connection with the employment of women and child labour, unemployment was growing. A long working day, low wages, bad housing conditions, the high cost of food stuffs, caused by high tariffs on bread, established for the advantage of the landlords, condemned the workers to the condition of starvation.

The French workers, like their English brothers in the first period of machine production fought against the introduction of machines. The workers broke up, smashed mechanical machines, and appealed to the Government with a request to prohibit the application of machines. In a number of cities (Lyons, Rouen, etc.), strikes and riots occurred. The Government fought against the growing working class by prohibiting unions and strikes under the corresponding articles of the Napoleonic code, by arrests and the application of armed force.

Although the proletariat of France during that period was *still not capable of independent political action*, its rôle in the political struggle was growing. The workers and artisans participated actively in the republican movement; jointly with the petty bourgeoisie they organized secret societies and illegal conspiratorial organizations against the Bourbon Government. The republican circles of «carbonaries»<sup>1</sup> were increasing and multiplying.

**The Utopian Socialists.**

A ruthless exploitation of toilers was taking place in France. The hard conditions of the workers, the horrors and contradictions of the capitalist order could not pass in vain for the advanced people of that time. Socialist teachings began to rise as a protest against the yoke of capitalism.

**Saint Simon.  
1760-1825.**

*Saint Simon* gave a brilliant criticism of the capitalist order. A duke by origin. Saint Simon already in the years of the Great French Revolution renounced his title and went over to the ranks of the third estate. While at first he enriched himself by the purchase and sale of land taken away from the nobility, he soon was bankrupted and spent the greatest part of his life in need and starvation.

Saint Simon clearly recognized the negative features of the capitalist order, with its competition, crises, and anarchy of production<sup>2</sup>, with a group of parasites on one hand and the hard condition of the toiling masses on the other. Saint Simon subjected to sharp criticism all these dark sides of capitalism. Saint Simon was astonished at the absurdity of the contemporary society, where «the idle classes (nobility, officials) rule over the producing classes.»

Saint Simon observed the class struggle which took place between the bourgeoisie and the landowners and depicted the entire history of France as a lawful process. Changes in the social order, in the opinion of Saint Simon, are the results of changes taking place in property rights. The right of property is not a kind of eternal and unchangeable right. «In every country,» writes Saint Simon, «the basic law is that which establishes the form of property and the measures protecting it; but, because this law is a basic law, it does not yet follow, that it cannot be changed.»

<sup>1</sup> *Carbonaro*—in exact translation means «the coal man». This name went over to France from the national-revolutionary movement of Italy.

<sup>2</sup> Economic Disorder, Lack of Plan.

In his «Industrial System» Saint Simon depicts a picture of the future ideal society where labour is a basic principle, where everyone receives according to his ability and where the entire economic life is directed according to a single plan from one leading centre. At the head of the society in the opinion of Saint Simon, must stand the «industrialists» these «natural commanders of the toiling nation» and the scientific technical intelligentsia to which Saint Simon attributes great significance. However, under the word «industrialists» he understands not only the bosses, the entrepreneurs but also the workers. Saint Simon speaks readily about the class struggle of the «industrialists» against the landowning nobility but he passes by the class struggle of the workers against the bourgeoisie. The great thinker speaks only about the necessity of improving the position of the «most numerous and the poorest class.» But Saint Simon does not see the revolutionary role of the proletariat. Saint Simon objected to the use of force or of political struggle. He hoped that he would accomplish his plans as it were, with the help of peaceful reform guided slowly by some benevolent being.

Saint Simon did not propose to destroy private property on land, factories and shops and consequently he was not a socialist.

Saint Simon only wanted to bring order into the capitalist system, to eliminate its defects while preserving the basis of the bourgeois society. However, as the representative of the most advanced strata of the industrial bourgeoisie of that time, Saint Simon stood much in advance of them. In the course of time, however, Saint

Simon came to the conclusion that the future belongs to the working class.

In his later writings Saint Simon declared that the liberation of the working class constitutes his final aim. The philosophy of Saint Simon found its followers largely among the intelligentsia.

The disciples and followers of Saint Simon (Saint Simonites) on the basis of his teachings, reached the conclusion of the necessity for turning all the means of production into social property and they were convinced socialists. «The World Association<sup>1</sup> — such is our future; to everyone according to his ability, to every ability according to its deeds — such is our new right. Man will no longer exploit man», — wrote Saint Simon. The Saint Simonites saw in the workers a special class of exploited. However the socialism of the Saint Simonites remained a peaceful utopian teaching which did not connect the realisation of its aims with the class struggle of the proletariat. Saint-Simonism was mainly spread among the intelligentsia. In the



St. Simon.

teaching of Saint-Simon was reflected the development of French industry in the first quarter of the 19th century, the growth of the industrial bourgeoisie which was setting forth its right to the administration of society, and the miserable conditions of the working class which still was not conscious either of its final aims or of the road leading towards them.

**Charles Fourier**  
(1772—1837).

Another representative of Utopian socialism was Charles Fourier, the son of a merchant and the representative of a firm. Fourier was acquainted with the actual practice of economic life in capitalist society. In his writings Fourier subjects it to a sharp and annihilating criticism. The root of evil, in the opinion of Fourier, is the absence of a planned, single organization of labour, economic disorder, anarchy of production. Many forces are wasted in vain. There exists a whole army of parasites and loafers who live at the expense of the labour of the others. All of this leads to the decomposition and the degeneration of society. Merciless competition, the struggle of all against all, the idleness of some and the unbearable labour of others, the wealth of the few and the poverty of the masses — such is the picture of capitalist society based on private property and individual labour.

«In capitalist society», — wrote Fourier, «every worker is an enemy of the mass, whose interests contradict his own personal interests. The doctor wishes that there should be as many sick as possible, and the prosecuting attorney as many court trials

<sup>1</sup> Association — Society, Commune.

as possible. The architect dreams about fires which would destroy one quarter of the city, and the glazier — of hail storms which would break all the windows. The tailor and the shoemaker are very satisfied when the public receive poor material and weak leather as under these conditions clothing and footwear are worn out three times as fast, which is to their greatest advantage. For the maintenance of the court in France 120,000 crimes have to be committed. And thus, in civilized society every individual is in a state of constant war against the collective. No other result could be expected under an anti-social order», — concludes Fourier.

Fourier saw the way out of the situation in the organization of a special labour «socialist commune», the so-called phalanx<sup>1</sup>. The labour in these Phalanxes would be varied and attractive; for this reason no one would refuse to carry it out. Human passions and endeavours which in contemporary society serve as the sources of evil and vice would be diverted in the phalanxes, in the necessary direction and would become the source of happiness and pleasure.

Each of these phalanxes were to consist of from 1,500 to 2,000 people and be the nucleus of the socialist society; a society based on collective labour and common property. Everyone upon joining the Phalanx gives either his labour, joining it as a common worker or invests into it his financial resources becoming in this way a sort of shareholder. The clear income of the phalanx, therefore, was to be distributed between labour and capital; one-third to be received by capital, two-thirds — by labour and talent. The «talents» share of income to be distributed according to merits. In this way Fourier even in his phalanx preserves the compensation of the capitalists alongside with the distribution of the products in accordance with the quality and quantity of the expended labour.

In the centre of each phalanx was to be located a phalanstery, a great communal house, with a communal kitchen, dining-room, shops, schools, libraries, etc. The woman was to have equalrights with man. The children were to be educated by the society.

Fourier hated revolutionary struggle and violence. He considered political activity nonsensical and for the realization of his plans he waited for some wealthy man to give him money for the organization of the model Phalanx. For dozens of years daily, at a given hour, Fourier expected a millionaire who would wish to become a benefactor of the whole of humanity.

The teachings of Fourier were full of deep sympathy for the toilers. But he did not see the role of the working class as the destroyer of the old capitalist society and the builder of the new Communist society.

### The Basic Features of Utopian Socialists.

Saint Simon together with his disciples and Fourier in France and Owen in England were the initiators of utopian<sup>2</sup> socialism. Utopian socialists saw all the evils of the capitalist society, subjected to severe criticism its entire basis and by this facilitated the growth of the class consciousness of the workers. The useful rôle of the utopian socialists was not limited to their negative criticism of the bourgeois society, which educated the proletariat. They gave a number of positive conclusions regarding the future society in which, in an obscure form, was expressed the demand for the destruction of classes, the



Fourier.

<sup>1</sup> *Phalanx* was a detachment of troops in ancient Greece. In the opinion of Fourier his phalanx was to be such a detachment, one which will gradually destroy the capitalist society.

<sup>2</sup> The word *utopia* means «a non-existing place.» *Utopian* — unreal.

destruction of the contradictions between the city and the village, the destruction of the family, of private property, of hired labour, the transformation of the State into a simple administration of production, — all of these conclusions, contrary to the intentions of the utopians meant a demand for the destruction of the exploiting classes.

But the utopian socialists did not openly put forward this demand in as much as they did not see either the road to Communism nor that class which would achieve it. And even this transition, in the majority of cases, appeared to them not as the socialist revolution but as the peaceful, gradual, growing in of socialism into Capitalism.

Utopian Socialism could not point the real way out. «It was unable either to explain the essence of wage slavery under capitalism, or to discover the laws of its development, or to find that *social force* which is able to become the creator of the new society.» (*Lenin.*)

The utopian socialists thought that it was sufficient to point out the defects of the existing order and to draw a picture of the ideal society and the people themselves would go towards it: In their opinion the basic revolution had to take place not in the existing economic conditions but in the minds of the people.

The all omnipotent concrete power of thought, *the idea*, — such, is the opinion of the utopians, — was the basic moving force of history. This *idealism* is the characteristic feature of the utopians who did not understand the class struggle and the rôle of the proletariat and who placed their confidence in the power of conviction, propaganda and direct example. With the further development of the class struggle and the independent political activity of the proletariat, utopian socialism loses its former significance. While the great utopians — Saint Simon, Fourier, Owen, — were in many respects revolutionary, their disciples on the other hand always formed a reactionary sect. In the epoch of ever sharpening class struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, they still attempt to reconcile the class contradictions and in the new historic environments they still firmly cling to the antiquated system of their teachers, which, after the appearance of revolutionary Marxism, can play only a reactionary rôle.

## § 18. The Revolution of 1830 and the Epoch of the July Monarchy (1830—1848).

### The July Revolution of 1830.

By their policy directed in the interests of the agricultural nobility, the Bourbons were bringing about ever greater dissatisfaction among the wide strata of the bourgeoisie, peasantry and workers.

Charles the 10th who ascended the throne after the death of his brother, Louis the 18th, was the leader of the emigré nobility; he decided to break through and to satisfy their demands at any cost.

In order to pay a compensation of one billion francs to the emigré nobility the Government lowered the interest which was paid on the State notes. In July, 1830 Charles the 10th issued certain decrees by which he closed the opposition newspapers, disbanded the House of Deputies and still further narrowed the suffrage rights limiting them only to the large landowners. These measure awoke a protest on the



part of the big bourgeoisie. The Stock exchange responded to those decrees by a sharp fall in the rates of the State notes. However, the bourgeoisie did not intend to enter upon the path of revolution in as much as it feared the people more than the king.

The first to come out on the streets were the typesetters from the printshops of the closed papers. On the day following the publication of the king's decrees barricades were built in the workers districts of Paris. About 10,000 workers, artisans and students fought on these barricades. The *Marseillaise*<sup>1</sup> was the song of the streets, shouts of «Down with the Bourbons!» rang throughout Paris. The gendarmes and police dispersed the crowds, the king's troops destroyed barricades, but they arose anew and from windows in the narrow streets were showered bullets and stones and bricks flew. In the bloody fights the revolutionists took possession of the town hall and the king's palace. Part of the troops went over to the side of the rebels and part left the city. The king fled. Victory was on the side of the rebels. However workers, artisans and the petty bourgeoisie, who fought on the barricades were not successful in enjoying the fruits of their victory. These were appropriated by the big bourgeoisie, which feared the people, fearing even the word «republic.» The financial circles advanced for the throne Louis-Philippe the duke of Orleans a relative of the Bourbons, who was closely connected with these financial circles. «Louis Philippe — is the best of Republic», — ironically declared the old General, La Fayette to the barricade fighters. The bourgeoisie, which was well-organized fully utilized the victory of the unorganized and still insufficiently class-conscious proletariat. It did not give it any concessions, not even in the form of the establishment of a bourgeois republic. A bourgeois monarchy was established in France.

The experience of the Revolution of 1830 served as a great lesson to the workers; they began to understand that the bourgeoisie utilizes them as a simple weapon for the achievement of its class aims. After the revolution of 1830 the workers become much more politically independent.

The July Revolution of 1830 put an end to the attempts of the landlord reaction to restore the old order. It strengthened the bourgeois order but the power fell not into the hands of the entire bourgeoisie but came only to its upper strata — the banking, financial bourgeoisie.

The French Revolution of 1830 made the first break in feudal reaction which reigned over Europe following the Vienna Congress. Revolutionary movements took place in Italy, Belgium and Poland. Uprisings also took place in a number of German duchies. In England, the working class carried on a struggle for universal suffrage.

**The July Monarchy — the Reign of the Bankers (1830—1848).** After the July revolution when the liberal banker *La Fitte* conducted his compère the Duke of Orleans in triumph to the Hotel de Ville the former uttered the words: «From now on the bankers will rule.» «*La Fitte* had revealed the secret of the revolution», (*Marx*) and in reality the July Monarchy<sup>2</sup> was the kingdom

<sup>1</sup> *Marseillaise*—a revolutionary song of the times of the Great French Revolution.

<sup>2</sup> The July Monarchy of Louis Philippe was so called because it was established in July, 1830.

of the financial aristocracy together with a group of the «feudal lords of industry» — the railway kings, the coal barons, the owners of iron mines and section of the big landowners who were connected with them. This clique was sitting on the throne, it dictated laws in the houses, it distributed government positions» (*Marx*).

**«The Legitimate Country».**

Only the rich could elect deputies to the Legislative Assembly. The right of suffrage was granted only to him who paid yearly not less than 200 francs in direct taxes and, in order to be elected, it was necessary to pay yearly not less than 500 francs in taxes.

Out of the 34 million population of France only 240,000 could participate in the elections. These narrow circles of electors were mockingly nicknamed «the legitimate country.» To all demands for the extension of the right of suffrage, the Minister of Louis Philippe — *G u i z o t* constantly gave the shameless reply: «Get rich and you shall become electors!»

In order to ensure for itself the majority in the House the Government resorted widely to the system of bribery and the electors were granted profitable positions, pensions, reward, etc. Louis Philippe himself viewed his crown as a source of income.

«The July Monarchy was nothing else but a stock company for the exploitation of the national wealth of France; dividends<sup>1</sup> which were divided among Ministers, the Chambers and 240,000 voters and their hangers-on. Louis-Philippe was the director of the company»,— wrote Marx about that shameless plunderous policy of self-enrichment which was carried on by the ruling clique. The share companies and banks were growing, railway companies were formed which received big advances from the Treasury. The savings of small share-holders fell into the hands of big financial magnates. State loans were contracted, bringing big profits to the bankers and weighing as a heavy burden upon the shoulders of the toilers. The entire officialdom of the July monarchy was distinguished by corruption and bribery. The ruling clique was enriching itself also through the plundering of the colonies.

In the epoch of the July Monarchy France seized Algiers and a number of islands in the Indian Ocean. Its policy roused ever greater and sharper dissatisfaction, not only in the ranks of the petty bourgeoisie, workers and peasants, but also among wide groups of the industrial bourgeoisie, which grew up together with the growth of French industry.

**The Industrial Revolution in France.**

The years of the July Monarchy (from 1830—1848) was a period when the course of its capitalist development accelerated rapidly in France. *The industrial revolution* embraced one sphere of industry after another. The machine was squeezing out and replacing the artisans.

In the course of 8 years (from 1839 to 1847) the number of steam-engines in French industry grew from  $2\frac{1}{2}$  to  $5\frac{1}{2}$  thousands. The machine received the widest application in the cotton textile industry, and in the silk industry the Jacquard machine, which made it possible to weave any design, was widely used.

<sup>1</sup>Dividends — a profit on shares.

Heavy industry also developed. The output of iron ore increased by  $2\frac{1}{2}$  times. The consumption of coal, was growing, railway lines were laid. While the first railway in France was opened only in 1832, already in 1847 more than 1,800 kilometres of railway lines had been laid.

The turnover of foreign trade was also growing. During the time of the July Monarchy it doubled, reaching  $2\frac{1}{2}$  billion francs.

Nevertheless, the industrial revolution was taking place in France not only at a much later period, but also much more slowly, than in England.

The retarded capitalist development of France was characterized by a large percentage of agricultural population, and actually as late as 1846 the agricultural population constituted about three-fourth of the entire population of France.

However, in the middle of the 19th century the French peasants were no longer those independent property owners that had emerged from the Great French Revolution. The process of the destruction of the peasant as the petty independent agricultural producer, inevitable under capitalism, was going on also in France.

Formally the French peasant was the owner of his land; he continued to remain on «his» plot of land. But in reality he was no longer an independent owner; he was in the claws of the mortgagers, usurious capital. His plot of land was mortgaged and remortgaged, and the peasant himself was entangled in a net of debts.

The heavy taxes, direct and indirect, were weighing heavily on the small peasant holdings. A poor harvest or a delay in the sale of agricultural products compelled the peasant, to crawl into debt and to mortgage his land at high, usurious rates.

The debts lying on the peasants' holdings, in the form of mortgages, were constantly growing. In the middle of the 19th century they already exceeded 11 million francs and absorbed about one-third of the net income of the peasants. Another third was eaten up by state taxes.

Having freed himself from the yoke of feudalism the peasant fell into the claws of the usurer. However with the stubbornness of the petty proprietor he continued to cling on to «his», so-called plot of land, to «his» parcel<sup>1</sup>, preferring to undergo any conditions of slavery if only he could preserve this «property», the extent of which according to the French expression — at times did not exceed the size of a «handkerchief.»

The large landowners of France were taking advantage of the difficult conditions of the peasantry. The landlords who remained in France in the years of the revolution, «the restored seigneurs», who returned to France together with the bourbons, the large bourgeoisie who had bought up estates already in the epoch of the Great Revolution — all of them were renting their lands to the neighbouring peasantry, who had little land, under very hard, enslaving conditions.

Together with the development of capitalism *was also growing the differentiation of the peasantry*. On the one hand the strata of the village rich were separating from its ranks. The well-to-do groups in the village took advantage of the growing prices on bread and other

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<sup>1</sup> *Parcel* — Small plot of land.

agricultural products, used hired labour to an ever greater extent, improved the cultivation of the land and developed stock breeding.

On the other hand, the strata in the village, which was becoming bankrupt with the development of capitalism, was transformed into agricultural workers or into owners of «dwarf» peasant holdings. Thus, for instance of 7—8 million peasant-«owners» there were over 3 million poor peasants who no longer paid their taxes.

The squeezing out of handicraftsmanship by the factory was also worsening the conditions of the peasantry depriving them of any auxiliary earnings.

However, the peasants were willing to undergo any decrease in their earnings, any lowering of their standard of living, in order to remain on «their» plot of land.

And this tenacity of the peasant-handicraftsman in turn delayed the strengthening of industry and retarded the inevitable process of the replacement of petty production by large machine industry.

The hard and ever worsening condition of the peasant was naturally arousing in him growth of dissatisfaction against the rule of the July Monarchy.

However, the peasants who constituted the basic mass of the population of France were, nevertheless, still unable to defend their own interests.

«In so far as millions of families live in economic circumstances which distinguish their mode of life, their interests, and their culture, from those of other classes and make them more or less hostile to other classes, these peasant families form a class. But in so far as the tie between the neighbouring peasants near one of propinquity, and in so far as the identity of their interest has failed to find expression in a community, in a national association, these peasant families do not form a class. They are, therefore, unable to defend their class interest in their own name whether through parliament or through a congress.» (Marx.)

*To the extent that the peasant himself cultivates his land, to the extent he belongs to the toiling sections of the population he is ready to see in the working class his leader. To the extent that he is a petty property owner and wishes to maintain his position as a property owner, — to that extent he gravitates towards the bourgeoisie. Only under the condition that the working class and its party follow the correct line in relation to the peasantry can the proletariat come out as a leader (hegemon) in the struggle of all the toilers against the remnants of feudalism, against autocracy in the epoch of the bourgeois democratic revolution.*

And «to the extent that the proletariat is not successful in leading the revolution, — the force always falls under the leadership of the bourgeoisie.» (Lenin).

**The Waverings  
of the City  
Petty Bourgeoisie.**

*A strata of the city petty bourgeoisie was also as yet very great in France due to the longevity in France of artisanship and manufacture. This strata of the petty city bourgeoisie consisted of traders, shop-keepers, artisans, handicraftsmen, the owners of small shops etc.*

Their position was very hard. On the one hand they were oppressed by

big capital, — bankers and factory - owners. Large stores were squeezing out small shops; shops and factories were squeezing out small artisan shops. The yoke of increasing taxes was becoming ever more unbearable. The least secure strata of the petty bourgeoisie was going through bankruptcy and being transformed into workers. Hence their hatred towards the conquering bourgeoisie which was squeezing them out and their growing dissatisfaction with the government of Louis-Philippe who carried out the will of the bankers. But on the other side, the petty bourgeoisie was striving in every possible way to strengthen its position of small bosses; its representatives did not lose hope of working up into the ranks of the bourgeoisie, like some of their more lucky comrades. Hence the fear of the petty bourgeoisie of the proletariat with socialist ideas, with its striving towards the destruction of private property. *Hence the unstable, wavering rôle of the petty bourgeoisie.*

These waverings were sharply manifested in the revolution of 1848.

The leader of the petty bourgeoisie in the thirties and forties of the 19th century was a member of the House of Deputies, *L e d r u R o l l i n*, who, in demanding the democratic republic, universal suffrage, the progressive income tax, and the organization of credit accessible to all, frankly declared: «I am not a Communist and I hate Communists.»

#### **The Labour Movement.**

The conditions of the working class of the July Monarchy was very hard. Frequently the working day was more than 15 hours. Woman and child labour was exploited mercilessly. The only law existing at that time for the protection of labour that of limiting the working day of miners to 12 hours a day, was not observed in actual practice. The wages were so low, that the mass of the workers were in a state of semi-starvation.

The workers suffered particularly from unemployment in the years of the industrial crisis when the operation of many shops and factories was stopped. The prohibition of strikes and unions remained in force. The Government of Louis Philippe dealt brutally with the labour movement. Nevertheless, the labour movement was growing. The general number of workers as well as the cadres of the shop-factory proletariat, was growing due to the development of industry. However the majority of the workers, still continued to work in small enterprises and in the artisan shops.

In the period of the July Monarchy the working class was already coming out in a much more organized manner. Instead of revolts against the machine, the workers were going over to the method of strike with demands for the curtailment of the working day and for an increase in pay. Mutual aid societies grew which at times took upon themselves the leadership of strikes among the workers.

#### **The Lyons Uprisings (1831 and 1834).**

The Lyons revolts of 1831 and 1834 marked the most significant events in the labour movement of the thirties. In the Lyons silk weaving industry manufacture based on hand labour still predominated. The large merchants supplied several hundred «manufacturers» with raw material and they in their turn distributed orders to 8,000 owners of small shops employing journey-men and apprentices. Their general number reached 30,000. The merchants and «manufacturers»

exploited severely both the small shop-owners and their workers. While working in one and the same shop, alongside of each other, the owners of the small shops and their workers were brought together by the common hatred against the forestallers and «manufacturers», in spite of the fact that the owners of the small shops attempted to shift on to the shoulders of the workers the burden of exploitation which was imposed upon them by the «manufacturers».

The wages of the Lyons workers were very low and in 1831 the journey-men workers and guild masters demanded from the «manu-



The uprising in Lyon 1831.

factors» the establishment of a limit beyond which the wage could not be lowered. The manufacturers at first seemed to agree to the establishment of such a «rate», however, a little later they refused to carry it out. In response to this the Lyons workers declared a strike. Crowds of indignant workers paraded through the city. A detachment of the bourgeois national guard met the procession of workers with rifle shots. This served as a signal for an uprising (November 21st, 1831). «To arms!» shouted the workers building barricades. On the banners of the rebels were inscribed the words: «To live and work or to die in struggle!» Troops and detachments of the national guard composed of «manufacturers» were sent against the workers. The toilers fought against the exploiters in an open three-day

battle. The battle ended in the victory of the workers, the troops were withdrawn from Lyons.

But the workers did not take advantage of their victory. The former city authorities remained in Lyons. The attempt of the more advanced workers, by connecting the movement with the republicans, to give the uprising a political character, to direct it against the government and to arrest local authorities, was a failure. The small shop-owners took over the leadership of the struggle into their hands and attempted in every possible way to limit the movement only to economic demands and to conclude an agreement with the «manufacturers» as soon as possible. They weakened the revolt by their negotia-

tions with the authorities. On account of this, when new detachments of government troops came to Lyons the workers surrendered without a struggle and returned to work. In this way the first Lyons uprising of 1831 demonstrated the unpreparedness of the working class for the capture of power, but at the same time it sharply emphasized the chasm between labour and capital and marked the beginning of the further development of the struggle of the working class.

The second uprising of the Lyons workers in 1834 demonstrated to what extent the class consciousness of the proletariat had risen during these three years. Alongside the mutual aid society which united the owners of small shops, there was already in existence a separate society of the journey-men. Socialist ideas and the striving for a republic to replace the monarchy of Louis-Philippe had penetrated also the ranks of the workers. Individual advanced workers were already joining the underground republican societies. A wave of dissatisfaction among the workers was provoked by the law of 1834, by which the mutual aid societies which previously existed in Lyons, were banned. A sharp protest arose among the workers. The revolutionary movement was growing in the workers' districts. At this time the leadership of the struggle was in the hands of the Republicans. The new uprising which flared up on April 5th, 1834 was distinguished from the first by a much more glaring political tinge. However, the artisan composition of the Lyons workers at this time, also laid a definite impress upon this movement. The rebels had neither a clear consciousness as to the aims of the movement, nor a strong proletarian Party which could lead this movement. The reasons for the failure also lay in the poor technical preparation of the uprising. The workers had neither guns, nor a general plan of struggle. As a result of this the uprising was suppressed after six days of bloody battle. More than 1,200 people perished; houses were blown up, every one «whose hands and lips seemed to have been blackened by powder» war mercilessly shot.

The Lyons uprising of 1834 was a struggle of *class against class*. The workers fought against the capitalists in an open fight. In this lies the great significance of the Lyons events. It was immediately taken into account by the French bourgeoisie. «The Lyons uprising has disclosed an important secret — the internal struggle which is taking place in society between the possessing class and the class which has nothing» — wrote one of the bourgeois papers of that time.

#### **French Socialism and the Secret Societies of the Eighties.**

The Lyons uprising of 1834 found a response in other cities of France: in Chalon-Sur-Saône, Marseilles, Vienne and St. Etienne, etc. An attempt at uprising took place in Paris. Severe persecution could not suffocate the growing labour movement. The class consciousness of the proletariat continued to grow. The ideas of the utopian socialists with their criticism of the capitalist order were disseminated among the workers. The July-Revolution of 1830 and the selfishness of the bourgeoisie which it exposed, showed the most advanced workers the significance of a political struggle and the necessity for seizing political rights. The most advanced representatives of the working class joined the secret republican societies and began to acquire socialistic ideas. The ideas of *Louis Blanc* and *Blanqui* were at that time very widely disseminated.



**Louis Blanc**  
(1811—1882).

The son of a prominent official, *Louis Blanc* received a splendid education. While still a youth he became a prominent journalist and a little later gained prominence as an historian. Louis Blanc came out with the teachings of Socialist ideas in his works «Organization of Labour» and later — «The Right to Labour.»

«Every man,» stated Louis Blanc, — «has a right to existence, and consequently a right to labour.» The most important thing in the opinion of Louis Blanc was the correct organization of labour based on the socialization of the means of production. However, in the opinion of Louis Blanc this socialization must take place not through revolutionary capture of power by the working class, but by means of a gradual, slow introduction of socialism into capitalism. In order to give the workers the means of labour, Louis Blanc proposed to organize workers' artels, productive co-operatives, to which the Government should give temporary financial assistance. The labour in such a «socialist shop» would be easier than in the capitalist shop, the worker would become his own master and in this way these artels would gradually squeeze out private enterprises. Louis Blanc proposed to draw into participation in such artels not only workers but also the capitalists who would receive interest on the capital invested by them. And in order to secure credit from the State for the organization of such artels, Louis Blanc proposed universal suffrage.

Such is the utopian, peaceful road to Socialism which is pictured by the petty bourgeois socialist — Louis Blanc. As we can observe, Louis Blanc did not in any way connect the realisation of Socialism with the struggle of the working class. Louis Blanc was inimical to the revolution and the forceful capture of power. He dreamt of achieving Socialism without struggle. Louis Blanc did not see the entire contradiction between the interests of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat and attempted to «reconcile» the interests of labour with those of capital, to proclaim the common interests of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. In universal suffrage he saw the all-saving panacea.

Louis Blanc naively proposed that the bourgeois state, this organ of violence of the capitalists over the working class, should come to the assistance of the proletariat. He saw in the State not a weapon of class oppression but some kind of a super class organisation. In this way Louis Blanc remained entirely in the camp of compromising petty-bourgeois socialism, which has fully demonstrated its reactionary essence in the moment of the sharpening of the class struggle. «The French Socialist, Louis Blanc, gained a sad prominence in the revolution of 1848 when from the position of class struggle he passed to the position of petty-bourgeois illusions, coloured by phraseology seemingly 'socialist', but in reality serving only for the purpose of strengthening the influence of the bourgeoisie over the proletariat», wrote Lenin in 1917 when the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionists repeated the treacherous tactics of Louis Blanc. «Louis Blanc expected help from the bourgeoisie. He hoped and encouraged hopes that the bourgeoisie can help the workers in the matter of organisation of Labour.» (Lenin). In reality, he was only a lackey of the bourgeoisie.

The petty-bourgeois teachings of Louis Blanc were widely disseminated among the handicraftsmen-artisans and scattered artisan workers who still nourished the impossible petty-bourgeois illusions as to the possibility of maintaining the position of petty-independent producers within the capitalist society.

**Blanqui**  
(1805—1881).

While still a young student in the years of the Restoration *Blanqui* came into close contact with the underground circles of the Republicans and went head over heels into underground work. Throughout his entire life Blanqui remained an untiring revolutionist and he spent about forty years in jails. Twice he was condemned to death. Already during the July revolution in 1830 Blanqui fought on the barricades. The Lyons uprisings made a tremendous impression on Blanqui and intensified his hatred against the exploiters. In contrast to Louis Blanc, Blanqui emphasized sharply the irreconcilable character of class contradictions and the necessity of a revolutionary struggle and of an armed uprising.

In the thirties and forties Blanqui was still to a certain extent only a revolutionary-democrat.

The growth of the workers' movement and the participation of the Blanquists in the struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, acquaintance with the friends and followers of Babeuf and the influence of Marx and Engels, made Blanqui a Communist. In fact Blanqui throughout all his life remained a Utopian-Communist. He did not understand the rôle played by the masses in a revolution, and he

believed that the revolution can be made by a small group of revolutionary conspirators.

The secret, conspiratorial «Society of the Seasons» already embraced about 700 workers. It declared war «against all capitalists, bankers, large land-owners, — in a word, against all robbers who were fattening at the expense of the people.» However, it did not have firm contact with the masses. In order to protect its members from being detected, the society was organized on a basis of strict conspiracy. Everyone knew only his immediate commander. From time to time a general military review was called and everyone had to be ready for transforming the review into an uprising with the purpose of capturing the power into the hands of the toilers.

Such an attempt at an uprising was made by the Blanquists in Paris on Sunday, May 12, 1839, when police and authorities were out of town attending the races. The conspirators seized the city hall, elected Blanqui the commander-in-chief and formed a temporary government. However their attempt ended in failure. The working masses, among whom the Blanquists did not carry on extensive work and with whom they did not have close contact, remained indifferent.

The Parisians viewed with astonishment this handful of conspirators and did not understand what was really taking place. After the suppression of this attempt Blanqui and other leaders of the rebels were arrested and the society was broken up.

Blanqui saw clearly that only by means of an armed seizure of power and the establishment of a revolutionary dictatorship could the bourgeois society be broken up.

However, he did not understand the rôle of the proletariat as the only consistently revolutionary class, as the hegemony leader of the revolutionary struggle. In the working class Blanqui included all the toilers, not only workers, but also peasants, intelligentsia, — teachers and doctors. Blanqui over-estimated the rôle of the intelligentsia, considering it a leading force in revolution. At a time when Marx and Engels were working untiringly on the problem of drawing into the revolutionary movement the wide mass of workers, Blanqui in his work was relying, not upon the masses of the proletariat, but upon the small consolidated groups of the revolutionary-conspirators who set a certain date for an uprising to capture the power.

The actions of the Blanquists were not connected with the struggle of the masses and took place without taking into account the real, actual conditions. The isolation from the masses — such is the characteristic of Blanquism. «Blanquism is the capture of the power by minority», — wrote Lenin, who always emphasized the danger of detaching the vanguard from the millions of proletarians and the toilers.

The economic phase of the revolution was also not clear to Blanqui and his comrades.

The French Socialism of the forties, with its vague, deeply incorrect conception about the roads leading to the Communist society, reflected the insufficient development of French industry, the weakness of the shop-factory proletariat and the influence of the petty-bourgeois ideas over it. The French workers, while feeling keenly all the hardships under the capitalist order, were as yet not conscious of the fact that the road towards its overthrow and the building up the Socialist society lies through the proletarian revolution and of the dictatorship of the working class.

## § 19. Revolution of 1848 in France.

### The Immediate Causes of the Revolution.

«The Rule of bankers» and their shameless policy of self-enrichment was provoking ever greater dissatisfaction among the wide strata of the population.

The commercial-industrial bourgeoisie, the petty city bourgeoisie, the peasants, the workers — all were dissatisfied.

Infection of the potato crops and the poor harvest of 1845 and 1846, the industrial crisis of 1847 which spread throughout entire Europe, hastened the outbreak of the revolution. The high cost of food brought about bloody encounters in France.

The crisis of 1847, brought in its wake a number of bankruptcies, closing of factories and shops, the impoverishment of the petty bourgeoisie, unemployment and hunger to the proletariat. Under the pressure of the ever growing indignation of the working class, the commercial industrial bourgeoisie came forward with demands for reforms. The bourgeoisie organized banquets and demanded the extension of the suffrage rights. However the fear of the working class made the bourgeoisie cowardly, indecisive and ready, from the very beginning, to come to an agreement with the Government. When the Government prohibited a banquet set for the 22nd of February, the bourgeoisie submitted to the order. But on the day set for the banquet the workers and artisans and young students organized a gigantic demonstration in Paris. Individual encounters with police rapidly grew into an armed uprising. Towards the morning of February 24th, 1848, almost the whole of Paris was covered with barricades. Relentless struggles were taking place. The bourgeoisie did not participate in these struggles. The battle was carried on by the workers who were supported by the petty bourgeoisie. The February Revolution in its content was the bourgeois-democratic revolution, but its main driving force was the proletariat. «The February revolution was won by the workers with the passive support of the bourgeoisie» (*Marx*). The rebels occupied the king's palace in an open battle. Louis-Philippe fled having hardly sufficient time to sign his abdication. When the victory was in the hands of the rebels, the bourgeoisie again attempted to reduce it to a change of the king as was done in 1830. The people were told that Louis-Philippe abdicated the throne in favour of his grandson. However, armed detachments of the workers smashed the doors with the butts of rifles and broke into the Chamber of Deputies.

«Down with the King! Down with the Chamber!» «Down with Treacherous Deputies!» «Long Live the Republic!» shouted the rebels. With armed power they forced the formation of a Provisional Government. However, the new Government was found to be completely composed of representatives of the bourgeoisie. Then, the rebels forced the inclusion of Louis Blanc and of a worker Albert who was well known for his work in the underground organisation in the government. For the first time a worker took part in the Government. However, the majority in the Government belonged to the bourgeoisie.

And thus, from the very first days of the February Revolution began the struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

The bourgeoisie was striving in every possible way to postpone the proclamation of a Republic. Through the Provisional Government it was proposing to postpone the question of a republic until the calling of the Constituent Assembly. However, armed workers firmly demanded the proclamation of a republic in France. A gigantic crowd gathered around the building of the Town Hall where the Provisional Government was in session. «They want to fool us as they did in 1830. Beware of the traitors!» — shouted the workers. Cannons were trained on the main parts of the Town Hall: armed guards were placed at the entrance. «Republic! Proclaim a Republic!» shouted the crowd.

«If the demand is not fulfilled within two days I will return here at the head of 200,000 men», — declared one of the leaders of the rebels, to the Provisional Government.

And finally, the resistance of the Provisional Government was smashed. A gigantic sign was placed on the building of the Town Hall with the inscription: «France is proclaimed a single and undivided Republic».

Alongside with the struggle for the Republic the workers demanded that the Red Banner should be declared the national banner of the whole of France. The red banner waved on the barricades, under the red banner the workers marched, storming the king's palace, the bodies of the fallen fighters were covered with a red banner. And just for this reason the bourgeoisie feared the red banner — the banner of the workers' revolution. The bourgeoisie finally compromised in the manner which was characteristic of that time. The banner of the French Republic was proclaimed a tri-coloured banner with a red rosette.

The workers also demanded the improvement of their economic position. Under the demand of a «Social republic» with which the French working class came out were concealed the unclear, still vague conceptions of the proletariat of that time about some sort of republic where it would be easier for the worker to live and where he would not be exploited by the boss-capitalists. But the workers of that time did not have a clear understanding on the basis on which such a «red», «social» Republic had to be built. The French working class was still unable to realize its own revolution.

Even in June 1848, during the proletarian uprising, one of the demands of the workers of the St. Antoine suburbs, in place of the demands for *The Destruction of Private Property* stood the words: «In defending the republic we *Are Defending* private property.»

The slogan of the workers in the February days was «The right to labour.» Here also, the bourgeoisie, in order to gain time, was willing to make concessions. The Provisional Government agreed to organize national shops and promised to provide workers with work to ensure their livelihood. Of course, in reality, this was a deceit of the working masses. «The right to labour» cannot be realized under the capitalist order where the tools of labour belong not to the whole of society but to a handful of capitalists. However, the bourgeoisie was successful in deceiving the workers who were still not tempered by the experience of the class struggle, and who did not have their own militant Party.

On February 28th a workers demonstration demanded from the Provisional Government the organization of the Ministry of Labour.

Here also the bourgeoisie applied the tactics of concession in words—and deceit in actual deeds. Instead of a Ministry of Labour, the Provisional Government formed a «Commission for the Improvement of the Condition of the Toiling Masses.» This Commission was located in the Luxembourg Palace and for this reason it was named «the Luxembourg Commission». This Commission was given neither money nor an apparatus. The direction of its work was turned over to Louis Blanc and Albert. «They were to ram the foundation pillars of bourgeois society with their heads» (Marx). The Luxembourg Commission was in advance doomed to idle conversation and complete inactivity. By its creation the bourgeoisie only wanted to gain time and to distract the attention of the workers. In addition to that, by sending Louis Blanc and Albert to work in the Commission, the bourgeoisie had virtually removed them from participation in the Government, creating at the same time the impression that it was satisfying the demands of the workers themselves. It is true that in the Luxembourg Commission the workers could openly discuss their needs. Its sessions were attended by workers of almost all branches of labour existing in Paris. The Luxembourg Commission revealed the secret of the revolution of the 19th century from a European tribune: *the emancipation of the proletariat*» (Marx). The bourgeois papers were forced to print the report of the session and in this way—to disseminate Socialist ideas.

But the practical significance of the Commission, having neither people nor money, was very small. On the other hand, Louis Blanc did everything to minimize, to obscure the class content of work. Thus, for example, through his insistence not only the workers but also guild masters were permitted to participate in the Commission. In reviewing the conflicts between the workers and the bosses, Louis Blanc was diligently carrying out the same line «of compromise», obscuring the irreconcilable contradictions of the class interests of the workers and the bourgeoisie.

The decree reducing the duration of the working day to ten hours was nevertheless passed under the pressure of the workers.

**From February to June. The Tactic of Isolating the Working Class.** The bourgeoisie, through the tactics of semi-concession, agreements and compromises, was only striving to gain time in order to gather forces and smash the worker's movement by provoking the proletariat into an open revolt. The aim of the bourgeoisie in the period from February to June 1848 was *to isolate the working class*, to separate them from all the other classes and in this way to prepare its defeat.

It is just these aims that determined the policy of the Provisional Government. Thus, for instance, to please the bankers the Provisional Government paid the interests on State loans ahead of time; it established a compulsory rate for the currency bills of the banks. In the meantime the State Treasury was empty. The petty bourgeoisie and workers «had to pay out from their own pockets for the pleasant surprise given to the State creditors» (Marx). The Government declared that the savings banks would no longer pay out money on savings-accounts to the amount of over 100 francs. This measure very painfully affected

the petty bourgeoisie and set it against the republic. However, it did not fill the State Treasury.

Then the Provisional Government introduced an additional tax which added 45 centimes on every franc of direct taxes. In this way the direct taxes were increased to almost one and a half times.<sup>1</sup> This tax affected first of all the peasantry, i. e. the biggest majority of the French population. As the result of this it threw the peasantry into the camp of the enemies of the revolution. «They had to pay the costs of the February revolution, and from them the counter-revolution derived its chief material» (*Marx*).

In addition to that, in order to incite the peasants and the petty bourgeoisie of the city against the workers, the Provisional Government utilized the national shops. The shops were organized for the unemployed with the purpose in view of showing to the workers the «absurdity» of the Socialist idea. Instead of organizing some kind of productive work, for instance the building of railways and highways, and canals, in the national shops, to the contrary, often highly qualified workers were placed on heavy and unnecessary digging jobs. The industrial crisis and unemployment forced the workers to take these jobs. In May 1848, these shops included up to 100,000 workers. Everyone received only a miserable pay for his work but on the whole the daily maintenance of the national shops cost 70,000 francs. The bourgeoisie took advantage of this in order to set the petty bourgeoisie of the city and the peasantry against the workers. It affirmed that the new taxes were used only for the purpose of maintaining the national shops, that the deposits from the savings banks were given out because all the cash money was being used to pay wages to the workers in the national shops.

In this way the bourgeoisie was successful in depriving the proletariat of its possible allies. Now the bourgeoisie had only to prepare its military forces in order to smash the proletariat by provoking it into an open revolt. With this purpose in view the Provisional Government created a special «Guard Mobile» made up of unemployed youth, of tramps who had lost all contact with the working class and were ready to serve anyone for money. In this way were gathered 24 battalions of one thousand persons each.

The external policy of the Provisional Government was also reactionary. In the first Manifestoes it gave assurances that the French Republic was ready to give assistance to the people who were fighting for their liberation. However, in reality, the Provisional Government was striving for a union with Tsarist Russia, promising Nicholas the First to preserve neutrality in his attempt to suppress the revolutionary movement in Poland. In spite of its official declarations, the Provisional Government emphasized in every possible way to the foreign ambassadors its submission to the decisions of the Vienna Congress and the refusal to support any revolutionary movement in other countries.

With such a policy of the Provisional Government, the French Republic was refusing in advance to carry on that revolutionary war which could «kindle the national spirit, hasten the revolutionary process, push ahead the Provisional Government or to throw it over board.»

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<sup>1</sup> *Franc* — 100 centimes. Consequently instead of 100 Cent; 140 had to be paid.

«The Republic did not meet any resistance either from without or from within. This has disarmed it» (*Marx*).

**The Calling of  
the Constituent  
Assembly.**

Under such conditions the election to the Constituent Assembly which was elected on the basis of universal suffrage took place. Blanqui and other revolutionists insisted in vain upon the postponement of the elections in order to send people into the provinces, «who would be able to enlighten the peasantry.»

In order to secure the postponement of the election and to compel the Government to withdraw the troops from Paris, the Parisian workers organized a gigantic demonstration. On March 17th, 1848, about 200,000 people came out on the streets. At the head of the demonstration were Blanqui and other revolutionists. However, on the eve of this demonstration the bourgeois National Guard organized a demonstration against the left section of the Provisional Government. Then Louis Blanc took advantage of his popularity in order to transform the demonstration of March 17th, into a demonstration for the support of the Provisional Government as a whole. Louis Blanc saw very clearly that the Government was not doing anything and would not do anything to relieve the position of the workers, but nevertheless he came out in defence of the Provisional Government. The demonstration dispersed, forcing from the Government only a postponement of the election to the Constituent Assembly for two weeks. «And so you also became a traitor, you also!» — shouted one of the workers to Louis Blanc. This was the bitter truth.

As a result of the treacherous tactic of Louis Blanc the demonstration of March 17th only strengthened the Provisional Government. A month later, on April 16th, the workers again came out with the same demands. However, this time the bourgeoisie had already gathered about itself all the forces of counter-revolution. When the column of workers entered the Greave's Square, it had to go through the ranks of the bourgeois national guardsmen who met them with wild shouts: «Down with Blanqui! Throw the Communists into the water!» The bourgeois Provisional Government hastened to take advantage of this in order to bring five regiments of the regular army into Paris. Under such conditions the elections to the Constituent Assembly took place.

The Constituent Assembly was opened on May 4th, 1848. The bourgeois parties received the overwhelming majority. The Government was formed only of representatives from the bourgeois classes. Neither Louis Blanc nor Albert were any longer admitted. The Luxembourg Commission was closed. The chairman of the Constituent Assembly was given the right to call out troops in case of emergency. The results of the elections were such that the revolutionist Blanqui could come only to one conclusion: «Now the civil war is inevitable.» This conclusion became prophetic.

The first — the February — period of the revolution ended with the calling of the Constituent Assembly. Then came the second period, the period of the establishment of the bourgeois republic. The bourgeoisie, having turned away from the proletariat, the petty bourgeoisie and peasants who followed them in February, could now openly and



without any fear reject the demands of the proletariat. Such were the results of the treacherous compromising policy of Louis Blanc.

**Louis Blancism.** Louis Blanc in February 1848 on entering the Provisional Government, where the bourgeois had the overwhelming majority (9 out of 11), not only did not expose its bourgeois class essence but obscured and covered up in every possible way its danger to the proletarian policy by his «left» pseudo-socialist phrases; and in reality these phrases only strengthened the influence of the bourgeoisie over the proletariat. While remaining a member of the bourgeois Government, the «Socialist» Louis Blanc was in reality serving as a good camouflage obscuring the bourgeois class essence of the Provisional Government from the broad masses. While being the minority in the bourgeois Provisional Government Louis Blanc and Albert nevertheless were bearing the responsibility for all of its dishonest actions and treachery in relation to the working class. Their participation in the Government paralyzed the revolutionary activity of the working class and inspired it with the false belief that everything was satisfactory as long as «its» representatives were a part of the Government. «In reality, Louis Blanc played the part of a tail-end of the bourgeoisie, was a plaything in their hands» (*Lenin*). At the time when the bourgeoisie was getting ready to smash the workers in an open battle, Louis Blanc was calling the proletariat to peaceful united work with the bourgeoisie.

This treacherous compromising rôle of Louis Blanc who betrayed the working class and collaborated with the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie, was repeated by the Social-Revolutionists and Mensheviks in 1917 when they entered into the bourgeois imperialist Provisional Government for the purpose of collaborating with the bourgeoisie. But in the 1917 Revolution, the working class of our country had its own Bolshevik Party which mercilessly exposed the treachery of the Social-Revolutionists and the Mensheviks. Under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party, the proletariat of our country came out victorious in the October Revolution.

In the revolution of 1848 the French workers *did not have such a party*.

And finally, the working class itself in the epoch of 1848 had not been as yet a consolidated shop-factory proletariat. We know how great was the number of small shops in France and how comparatively small was the number of large shops and factories. However, already in 1848 «the proletariat was striving not for conciliation with the bourgeoisie but for the victory over it, towards development of the revolution and, at that, on an international scale» (*Lenin*). The proletariat could not pass by without a protest the provoking policy of the bourgeois Government. On May 5th, 1848, a gigantic demonstration of Parisian workers took place. A crowd of workers broke into the bourgeois Constituent Assembly and declared it disbanded. A list of the new Government with Blanqui at the head and other revolutionists was announced. This revolutionary Government demanded that immediate measures be taken «to destroy poverty and organize labour». To impose a billion franc tax on the rich and withdraw the troops from Paris. However, the Government detachments soon came up and dis-

persed the demonstration. Blanqui and other leaders of the uprising were arrested and the revolutionary clubs closed. The bourgeoisie now had a convenient moment in which to punish the proletariat, which remained without leadership.

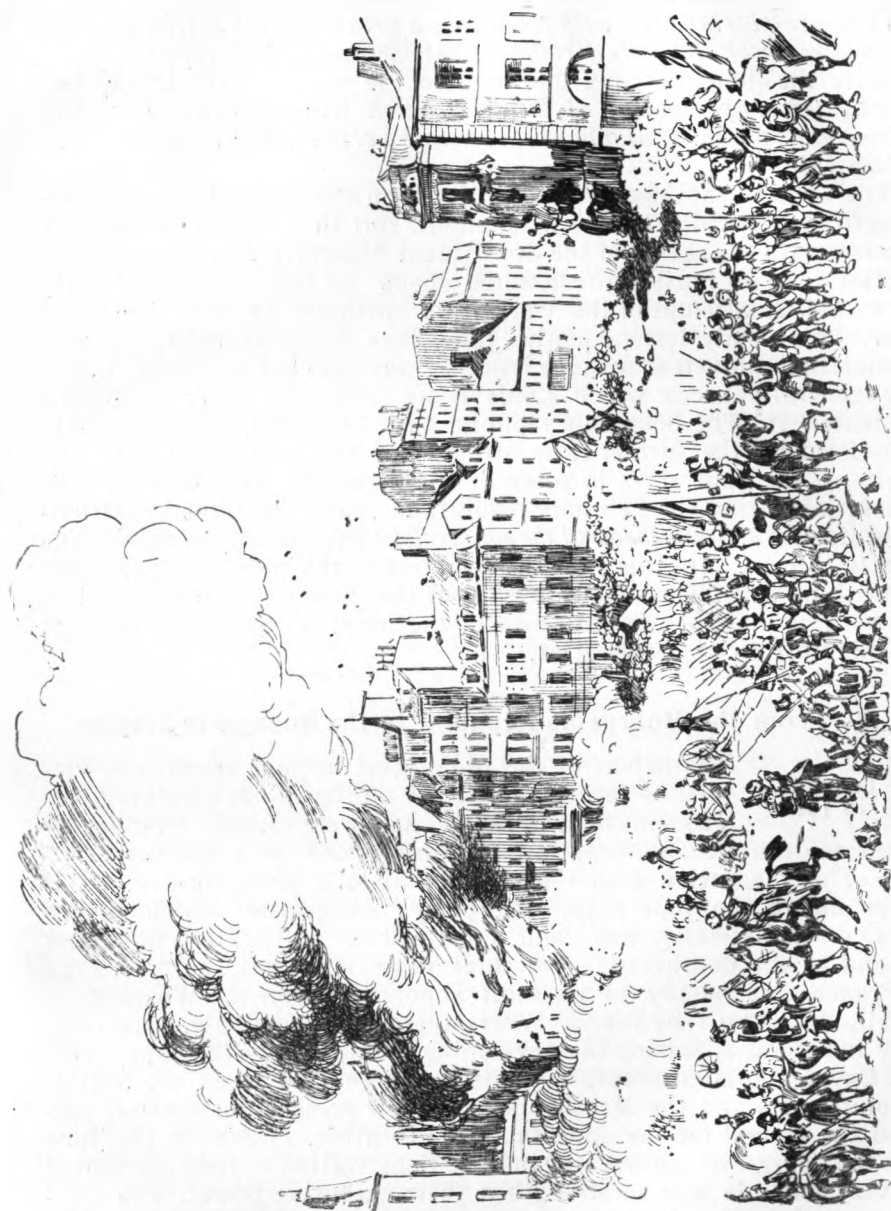
**June Days 1848.** The Provisional Government issued a decree on June 22nd, 1848, disbanding the national shops with the conscious purpose of provoking the workers to an armed struggle in order to «put an end» to them in an open battle. Over 100,000 workers were thrown out on the streets. «No choice was left to the workers, they had to starve or fight. They answered on June 22nd with an insurrection of great magnitude, *wherein the first great battle was fought between the two classes into which contemporary society is divided. It was a struggle for the preservation or destruction of the bourgeois order*». (Marx).

The workers' districts of Paris were covered with barricades. On these barricades fought not only the workers of the national shops but also the other detachments of the Parisian proletariat, — workers from mechanical shops, railwaymen, etc.

The Constituent Assembly declared martial law in Paris and turned over the entire power to General Cavaignac. Detachments of regular troops, bourgeois battalions of the national guards, and 24,000 of the Guard Mobile were thrown against the workers by Cavaignac. And at the same time the rebelling workers did not have a single leading centre, no programme, not even a sufficient quantity of ammunition. The petty bourgeoisie of Paris — shopkeepers and tradesmen, peasants, who once in a while wandered into Paris from dozens of miles around, — everything was thrown by the bourgeoisie into the battle against the proletariat.

The workers remained alone in their heroic struggle. «The petty bourgeoisie feared to trust the leadership of the proletariat, failing to understand that this fear drove it into having confidence in the bourgeoisie. Because in a society based on a relentless class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, particularly under the inevitable sharpening of the struggle by the revolution, *there cannot be any middle ground*.. In words Louis Blanc was as far from Cavaignac as heaven from earth... And at the same time... the very weakness, instability, credulity towards the bourgeoisie on the part of Louis Blanc, gave birth to Cavaignac and ensured his success». (Lenin).

Retreating step by step and sacrificing thousands of victims the workers continued to maintain their suburb. And finally, on June 26th, the Saint-Antoine suburb, the last fortress of the rebels, surrendered. A brutal persecution of the workers began. Everywhere workers in blouses and with blackened hands, were killed; the yards and the barracks were transformed into regular slaughter-houses where the rebels were mercilessly shot down; guards shot at prisoners who were packed into subterranean prisons, the wounded were killed with swords. Several thousand people were killed. 3,000 prisoners were shot; about 5,000 were sent to the prisons in the colonies. Not only separate houses but whole streets became desolate and were destroyed.



June days 1848 (entrance into the territory of St. Antoine).

**The Significance of the June days.**

In the struggle of two classes which took place in the June days of 1848, the proletariat suffered defeat. But the significance of the June days was great. In their famous articles in the «Neue Rheinische Zeitung» Marx and Engels brought out their full significance. As soon as the first shot rang out they took their stand decisively on the side of the

proletariat... *«In June the first great battle took place in Paris between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie for domination» (Engels).*

*«The proletariat falls with honour in a great historic battle; the June earthquake shook not only France — but the whole of Europe.»*

Only the June uprising disclosed to the workers *«the truth, that the slightest improvement of their condition remains an utopia within the bourgeois republic, utopia which becomes a crime when it seeks realization» (Marx).*

The Constituent Assembly was elected on the basis of that universal suffrage for which the workers fought. But this did not in any way interfere with the action of the Constituent Assembly which established martial law in Paris and showered shells on the proletariat with the very first attempt of the workers to encroach on the bourgeois order. The bloody lessons of the June days demonstrated to the proletariat that universal suffrage is not by any means that magic wand, that general panacea which Louis Blanc and the petty bourgeois considered it. The bourgeois republic with universal suffrage is only a platform for the further class struggle of the proletariat. As the result of the June days in place of the demands presented by the proletariat during the February revolution... came the bold revolutionary watchword: *«overthrow of the bourgeoisie! Dictatorship of the working class!» (Marx).* In this lies the greatest world-historic significance of the June days. The bloody lessons of the June days illuminated to the working class of the entire world the road to Socialism through the dictatorship of proletariat.

## **§ 20. From the Bourgeois Republic to the Bonaparte Empire.**

**The Constitu-  
tion of 1848.**

The defeat of the proletariat in June meant the victory of reaction. The law on the 10-hour working day was annulled, workers' clubs were closed, freedom of the press destroyed; martial law was introduced in a number of cities. *«The revolution ended with this historic shootings», — writes Lenin about the June days, «the petty bourgeoisie which predominated numerically was and remained a politically powerless tail-end of the bourgeoisie, and three years later was again restored in France... monarchy in its most abhorrent form»... «Where there is hell, devils will be found. Where there is the unstable, wavering, petty bourgeoisie, fearing the developing revolution, — the appearance of a Cavaignac is ensured», — wrote Lenin in 1917 when the Social-Revolutionists and the Mensheviks, by their treacherous tactics, prepared the ground for the appearance of Kornilov. Following the June days the bourgeoisie in working out the Constitution of 1848 attempted in every possible way to strengthen their executive power. The Constitution of 1848 entrusted this power to the President. He was the chief of the army and the police; he appointed all the officials, including the Ministers. The President was elected once in four years by the general vote of the country and did not in any way depend upon the Constituent Assembly. The rights of the Constituent Assembly limited to legislative matters and in the event of a conflict with the President it was powerless. And in reality a monarchistic order was restored*

under the name of the republic: «a republican head was fixed to the body of the monarchy».

With this ended the second period of the revolution — the period of the establishment of the bourgeois republic, the period of the activity of the Constituent Assembly (May 4th, 1848, — May 29th, 1849).

The first president the bourgeois republic elected was the nephew of Napoleon the First, *Louis Napoleon Bonaparte*. *Louis Napoleon was elected, on the whole, by the mass of the French peasantry*; they hated the bourgeois republic for raising their taxes and saw in Bonaparte the defender of the petty peasant property. A section of the bourgeoisie which dreamt of the restoration of the Empire also voted for Louis Bonaparte. And finally, a section of the workers also voted for him, as a protest against General Cavaignac who also was a candidate in the presidential elections.

But already in the presidential elections of 1848, the revolutionary proletariat put out its own candidate, — *Raspail*. Although Raspail received but a few votes, the nomination of their candidate by the workers had a great historical significance. This was «the first act whereby the proletariat, as an independent political party cut loose from the democratic party» (*Marx*).

The Constituent Assembly disbanded on May 29th after drafting the Constitution of the Republic. It was replaced by the Legislative Assembly. In the elections to the Legislative Assembly the overwhelming majority was received by the Monarchists — the legitimists<sup>1</sup> (adherents of the Bourbons) and the Orleanists (adherents of the Orlean dynasty). Out of 700 deputies, about 450 were adherents of the Restoration of the Monarchy. They formed the so-called «Party of Order.» They were divided only by the quarrels regarding the candidate for the throne. The second Party of the Legislative Assembly in power was the Party of the «Mountain»<sup>2</sup> representing the interests of the petty bourgeoisie. The leader of this Party was Ledru Rollin.

**Third Period of the Revolution (May 29, 1849.— December 2nd 1851).** The beginning of the activity of the Legislative Assembly opened the third and last period of the revolution — the period of the existence of the bourgeois republic. It continued for only two and a half years.

Following the June defeat of the proletariat, the petty bourgeoisie finding itself confronted face to face with the big bourgeoisie, was powerless to struggle against the ever growing reaction.

The monarchists — «the Party of Order», — who were preparing the restoration of the monarchy in France, were coming in conflict with the petty bourgeois «Mountain» which both in the Legislative Assembly and outside of it shouted that they would not permit anyone to encroach upon the Republican Constitution, upon the Republic, and universal suffrage. Bonaparte, who was also interested in destroying the Republic and climbing on to the French throne, for this reason

<sup>1</sup> *Legitimate* — lawful.

<sup>2</sup> This name was adopted by the party of the petty bourgeois 1848—1849, desiring to imitate the party of the «Mountain» of the epoch of the Great French Revolution.

was interested in getting the «Mountain» out of the way, and gave «The Party of Order» a suitable pretext to put an end to the «Mountain». He violated the Constitution which prohibited the use of French troops for the suppression of other people, by permitting the bombardment of Rome by the French expeditionary regiment. In the name of the «Mountain» Ledru Rollin submitted a motion in the Legislative Assembly impeaching Bonaparte for violating the Constitution. «The Party of Order» rejected the accusation declaring Bonaparte not guilty. On June 13th, 1849, the «Mountain» attempted to organize an uprising but was unsuccessful. Consequently it itself was accused of attempt to overthrow the Republic and its power in the Legislative Assembly was broken. By its unsuccessful attempt the petty bourgeoisie had only given a new pretext for the further intensification of reaction. «The Party of Order» came out victorious. In 1850 it carried out through the Legislative Assembly the annulment of universal suffrage which had been won on the barricades of the February revolution. The right of vote was granted only to those who lived in one place for not less than three years. This law deprived of the suffrage rights, first of all, the workers who were forced to migrate from place to place in search of work. About 3 million people, mainly workers were deprived of suffrage right.

Having destroyed universal suffrage, the Legislative Assembly passed a reactionary law against the press which re-established anew a large deposit for the publication of newspapers and a stamp tax on their sale. The increasing price on newspapers made them virtually inaccessible to the broad masses.

This activity of the Legislative Assembly made it very unpopular among the wide masses of toilers. It could not in any way count on their support. At the same time such conditions were created in France under which the bourgeoisie itself ceased to support their representatives in the Legislative Assembly.

**The Coup d'Etat  
of Louis Bonaparte.  
(December 2nd, 1851).**

The defeat of the petty bourgeoisie and the destruction of universal suffrage deprived the Republic of its last support. The dissatisfaction of the proletariat and the city petty bourgeoisie, the ferment which began among the advanced strata of the peasantry because of the ever growing taxes, indebtedness and impoverishment of the peasant economy, only strengthened the desire of the bourgeoisie for a strong State power. While in the June days of 1848 the working class was isolated from the remaining classes of society, now on the contrary, *around the proletariat began to rally the revolutionary elements of the city petty bourgeoisie and peasantry.* Isolation threatened the bourgeoisie. In the supplementary elections in Paris Republicans were elected in a number of Departments. Among the Parisian deputies were even participants of the June days. In the meantime, the Legislative Assembly in clearing the ground for the monarchist revolt, viewed Bonaparte as the main enemy standing in their road, an enemy who wanted to capture the throne for himself and would not be inclined to turn it over to the Bourbons and Orleans. For this reason the Legislative Assembly began to struggle against Bonaparte. The bourgeoisie fearing the consolidation of the petty bourgeoisie and peasantry

around the proletariat, fearing a new revolutionary explosion, craved for a strong power which would be able to hold the toiling masses under an iron heel. At the same time in the opinion of the bourgeoisie the struggle of the Legislative Assembly against Bonaparte and his ministry was only weakening the forces of the Government power. For this reason it began to turn its back on its representatives in the Legislative Assembly and was frankly showing its favour towards Bonaparte who lavishly gave out the most alluring promises. In the face of a struggle between two classes, more or less equal in strength, a struggle so sharp that it again threatened to grow into a civil war, the bourgeoisie was now ready to renounce its political rights if only to preserve and strengthen its class domination. Instead of the bourgeois Republic the bourgeoisie now preferred the concealed form of its class domination — the bourgeois Empire. Whenever necessary it could hide «behind the throne» in order to mask its domination from the proletariat and the broad masses of toilers. Under such conditions the question of the restoration of the Empire was only a matter of time.

Already in 1849 Louis Bonaparte organized «the Society of December 10», under the guise of a philanthropic society he was preparing cadres of his adherents for the eventuality of the coup d'état. Bankrupt gamblers, retired military officers, all sorts of adventurists and night life elements who hoped to strengthen their personal affairs by some sort of a successful adventure, the lumpen-proletariat — in a word, all the declassed elements who had lost their place in production and society, — such were the elements from which was composed the Bonaparte «Society of December 10.» This was the Bonaparte gang, a sort of private army of Louis Napoleon, a military force on which he could rely for the realization of his desires.

For the preparation of the coup d'état Louis Bonaparte utilized the dissatisfaction of the classes of the population. In showering alluring promises right and left, he flirted in turn with all the classes of the population, paying particular attention to the army. To the big bourgeoisie Louis Napoleon promised firm power and order ensuring the possibility for shameless profiteering; to the petty bourgeoisie he promised — the protection of their savings from the attacks of big capital; to the workers — defence from exploitation by the bourgeoisie; to the peasants — the defence of their petty property — both from the bourgeoisie and from the city «dividers»; in the army Louis Bonaparte revived the memories of the splendid victories of his uncle. «The maneuvering, based upon militarism (on the worst elements of the army), of the State power between the two opposing classes and forces which to a larger or smaller extent equalize each other, — such is the historic feature of Bonapartism» (*Lenin*).

While promising in words to defend the interests of all classes, in reality Bonaparte was guided first of all by the *interests of the big bourgeoisie*.

In the meantime the four years term of the presidency of Louis Bonaparte was already coming to an end, and, according to the law, he could not be a candidate a second time. This compelled Louis Bonaparte to undertake the coup d'état particularly in view of the fact that



the ground for it had already ripened. The bourgeoisie was evidently on his side, on his side were the army and the officials, i.e. the entire State apparatus. His opponents — the «Party of Order» in the Legislative Assembly were hated and despised by the broad masses.

On the night of December 2nd, 1851, Louis Bonaparte ordered the arrest of the most influential deputies of the «Party of Order.» The Legislative Assembly was dispersed by troops, on the streets of Paris were posted appeals to the population in which Bonaparte announced the continuation of his presidency for ten more years. And exactly a year later on December 2nd, 1852 Louis Bonaparte declared himself Emperor under the name of Napoleon the Third<sup>1</sup>. Thus began the Second Empire <sup>2</sup>.

The working class of France was not in a position to interfere with the monarchist coup d'état of Louis Bonaparte. «We have no arms; because in June 1848 we were all disarmed», stated the workers in response to the appeal to an uprising.

In a number of provinces the French peasantry which had already tried out all the advantages of the Bonaparte's regime during years of his Presidency were able to see in actual practice all the falsities of Louis Bonaparte's promises. The peasants saw that the domination of the big bourgeoisie, no matter whose «sword» shall shield it, can bring to them only new taxes, need and privations. The peasants in 14 departments met the coup d'état of Louis Bonaparte with uprisings. But these were only scattered revolts which were quickly suppressed by the Government. The advance of the peasantry, deprived of proletarian leadership, could not put up a single united front against Bonapartism. However, the peasant uprisings clearly confirmed the correctness of Marx's assertion that Bonaparte was supported by the property owners, rich peasants, the reactionary and conservative strata of peasantry. «The Bonaparte dynasty», — wrote Marx, «represents not the revolutionary but the conservative peasant... The Bonaparte dynasty represents not the intelligence but the superstition of the peasant, not his judgement but his prejudices, not his future, but his past.»

**The Lessons of  
the 1848 Revolution.**

The revolution of 1848 in France demonstrated in actual practice all the classes of the bourgeois society. It has shown that *«the liberal bourgeoisie fears a hundredfold more the independence of the proletariat than any kind of reaction»* (Lenin). That the liberal bourgeoisie always gives in to the reaction. It has shown that *the petty bourgeoisie and peasantry are wavering between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie* and in those cases when the proletariat cannot take away from the bourgeoisie the hegemony over the peasantry, it becomes a reserve of the bourgeoisie in the struggle against the proletariat. It has shown that *the only consistently revolutionary class of society is the socialist proletariat.*

<sup>1</sup> Napoleon the Second was considered the son of Napoleon the First who never was in power.

<sup>2</sup> The Second Empire with Napoleon the Third at the head continued up to September 4th, 1870.

The revolution of 1848 has shown that the proletariat cannot defeat the bourgeoisie if it does not draw to its side the village and the city poor, if it does not lead the struggles of this poorest strata against the yoke of capitalist exploitation, if it does not come out into the open jointly with them and lead them in the fight against the domination of the bourgeoisie. The revolution of 1848 has shown that *without the hegemony of the proletariat its victory is impossible*.

The revolution of 1848 *exposed the entire falsehood, all the uselessness of the compromised socialism which set itself above classes*. The shooting of workers in Paris by the bourgeoisie, on whose side was also the petty city bourgeoisie and the peasantry, which took place in June, «has definitely determined that only the proletariat has a socialist nature». The shooting has shown to the entire world that only the proletariat is socialistic and that there can be only one kind of Socialism and that is *proletarian socialism*. By this very fact «a death blow was struck at all noisy, motley, clamorous forms of pre-Marxian Socialism and a firm foundation was laid for the victory of Marxism in the labour movement» (*Lenin*).

The revolution of 1848 has shown that *the hangmen of the working class, the Cavaignacs, are growing up on the soil of compromising socialism, on the soil of Louis Blanquism and the wavering of the petty bourgeoisie*; it has also shown the essence of Bonapartism, and under which social conditions it arises.

The revolution of 1848 has shown that *the armed uprising* is not a toy with which one can play, that *it is an art* which demands caution and ability in the selection of the moment and unswerving determination in the carrying out of the uprising itself. «If 'The Mountain', — wrote Marx about the uprising of the petty bourgeoisie of June 13, 1848, «wished to win in Parliament it should not have appealed to arms. If it called to arms in Parliament it should not have conducted itself on the street in a parliamentary way, if it seriously thought of a peaceful demonstration; it would be silly not to foresee that it would meet with a war-like reception. If it was intended for actual war, it was rather original to lay down the arms with which war had to be conducted».

All of these lessons of the 1848 revolution were subsequently developed and concretized in application to the epoch of imperialism by Lenin, and have shown their correctness on the experiences of the 1905 revolution, the February and October Revolutions of 1917.

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## CHAPTER V

### THE REVOLUTION OF 1848 IN GERMANY.

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#### § 21. The Social-Economic Development and the Class Struggle in Germany in the first Half of the 19th Century.

##### The Political Dismemberment of Germany.

In the 18th and the first half of the 19th century Germany did not exist as a single State. It was split up into a number of small duchies, independent from each other, free cities, etc. It is not without reason that the contemporaries used to say that there are as many German States as days in the year. And in reality on the eve of the Great French Revolution there were more than 360. The Vienna Congress, which changed the map of Europe to suit the conquerors, decreased the number of German States to 39. However, the creation of a single strong Germany contradicted the interests of the English bourgeoisie as those of the Russian landlords for whom it was more advantageous to have a constant competition between the separate German States.

The Vienna Congress only created a German confederation which established a very weak connection between the various German States. The only organ of this Union was the Diet of the Confederation, to which every German State sent its ambassadors. But every State continued to maintain its own army, its own courts, had its own laws, and had their own diplomats for carrying on foreign relations with other states. The decisions of the Diet did not have any real power and the struggles carried on within the Diet, as well as outside of it, by the two largest German states — Prussia and Austria — deprived the confederation of any unity.

##### The Economic Backwardness of Germany.

The political dismemberment of Germany which had existed since feudal times was the result of its *economic backwardness*. Not only England, but also France surpassed Germany by far in their economic development. The main reasons for this economic backwardness of Germany was its *remoteness from the world commercial routes*. After the main routes of the world trade were transferred from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic Ocean in connection with the discovery of America and the sea route to India around Africa, Germany found itself removed from this route as though it were cast aside into the provincial backwoods.

In addition to that the already weakened economy of Germany suffered greatly as a result of the *prolonged wars* at the end of the 17th in the 18th century, which were impoverishing Germany.

These two main causes created a situation where the agricultural economy, industry and commerce in Germany developed very slowly.

The separate districts of Germany each lived its own life, were not connected with each other into one economic whole. A feudal order was preserved in the German States.

**The Agricultural Economy and the Conditions of the Peasantry.**

The peasantry constituted the basic mass of the population of the German State. Their condition was very difficult. Feudal duties weighed them down like a heavy yoke. The hardest one was *corvée* — the duty of the peasant to work several days a week for the landlord. At times the peasants were forced to work their fields at nights — as after the *corvée* they had very little time for themselves. The peasants were considered the «hereditary» tenants of the landlords' land. However, frequently the landlord would drive them off the land joining their land to his own. The landlord-nobleman had also in his hands the right of judgement over the peasant. He even had the right to throw into jail peasants who refused to carry out the *corvée*.

The condition of serfdom was particularly difficult in eastern Germany — in Prussia. The landlords of East Prussia sold their grain and other products of agricultural economy to England where the city population was rapidly growing as a result of the developing industry and commerce. On this basis of grain export large landlords' economies were growing in East Prussia with large landlords' fields calculated for the export of grain to foreign markets. The export of grain brought large profits to the Prussian landlords and they strove in every possible way to extend their sowing area at the expense of the peasant land. At the same time they were increasing the *corvée*.

The downtrodden peasantry oppressed by the feudal order constituted the basic kernel of the Prussian Army. It is not surprising therefore, that in a decisive conflict with the Napoleonic troops the Prussian Army was torn to pieces.

**Reforms in Prussia in the Beginning of the 19th Century.**

The Prussian Government was confronted with the problem of creating anew an army with real fighting capacity for the struggle against Napoleon.

It was clear that the Prussian peasantry oppressed by serfdom, would not rise against Napoleon, particularly if Napoleon began to carry out the abolishment of the feudal serf order. But the German Government feared most of all the possibility of the Prussian peasantry following the example of the French peasants, the struggle for the abolishment of serfdom, «from below», through revolution. In addition to that, the Prussian landlords who sold their grain on the market, were already convinced that serf labour is not profitable, that the enslaved peasant worked slowly and poorly, and that the free hired agricultural labourer with a tiny holding of his own would cultivate the land of the master better.

Due to these considerations some reforms were carried out in Prussia during the first decades of the 19th century (1807—1821). In this way the personal dependence of the peasant was abolished. The most well-to-do strata of the peasantry (for example, the hereditary tenants) received the right to *buy off* their land from the landlords. The conditions of this purchase were very hard; the peasants had to pay the landlords 25 times more than the annual fee and in addition

to that they had to concede to him one-third or even one half of their land. As a result of this, during the first half of the 19th century, up to the revolution of 1848, only a small section of the *well-to-do* peasantry — about 300,000 people were able to buy off their land and at the same time they surrendered to the landlords over 400,000 hectares of land and paid about 20 million thalers<sup>1</sup> in money.

But a considerable section of the peasantry was not only unable but according to the law, was not even permitted to pay off the feudal duties. They were simply subjected to being driven off their land. The landlords were taking thorough advantages of this fact and year by year large areas of peasant lands were joined to the land of the landlords. As a result of this, the number of peasant holdings sharply decreased. Thus, for instance, in Prussia there were 45 peasant holdings per square mile in 1816, while in 1837 there were only 13 peasant holdings. In the 18th century in Mecklenburg there were 12½ thousand peasant holdings, while in 1848 — only 1,200. Large landlords estates were growing at the expense of the peasant holdings which were annihilated.

**The Prussian  
Way of Development of Capitalism in the  
Agricultural Economy.**

The money and land received from the well-to-do peasant in payment for the land provided the Prussian landlord with the possibility of extending and improving his economy, of changing to new methods of cultivation. An increased demand for grain and agricultural products from England, with her rapidly developing industry and growing city population, was bringing in turn great profit to the Prussian landlord and was drawing their economy more and more into the commercial turnover. During one decade from 1830 to 1840 prices on grain rose by 13—15%.

In hunting for profits, the Prussian landlords extended the cultivated area and changed from the tri-field system to the crop-rotation system, improving the cultivation of their land, increasing their stock, applying artificial fertilizers, increasing the fertility of the soil. Alongside with the free labour of serf-peasants (the fulfilment of feudal duties) in the landlord economy was being applied to an ever larger and larger extent, free hired labour which was a more productive labour than that of the neighbouring peasantry which possessed little or no land. Sugar beet refineries and breweries were built on a number of large estates. In this manner capitalist relationships began to develop in the agricultural economy of Prussia. This path of development of capitalism in the agricultural economy, when feudal dependence and serfdom relations are not liquidated at once in a revolutionary way, but are «slowly adapting themselves to capitalism» which preserves therefore for a long period of time these feudal features», — such a path of development Lenin calls the «Prussian» way of capitalist development in agricultural economy. Large landlord economies retain their place at the head of the bourgeois development, which gradually becomes of a more pronounced bourgeois character and gradually replaces the serf method of exploitation by the bourgeois method.

<sup>1</sup> *Tahler* about 75 cents at the pre-war rates of exchange.

There is still another path of the bourgeois, capitalist development of the agricultural economy. It can also take place, when it has at its head petty peasant economies, which destroy the feudal estates by revolutionary methods and then without them proceed to develop freely along the path of capitalist farming. In such cases the landlord economy is either non-existent or it is smashed by the revolution. The basis of the capitalist development here lies in «the free economy of the free farmer on the free and, free from any tenants of the middle ages, from serfdom and feudalism» (Lenin). This path of development of capitalism in the agricultural economy Lenin calls «the American»<sup>1</sup> way.

In the first half of the 19th century agricultural economy in Prussia began to make first steps along the slow path, painful for the peasantry, of transforming the landlords' feudal economies into bourgeois economies. However, the feudal order still continued to predominate and everywhere only a small strata of the large well-to-do peasantry (Grossbauer), was free from duties. The remaining peasantry was still dependent in various degrees upon feudalism. Up to the eve of the 1848 revolution the Prussian landlords had still preserved police and judicial authority over the peasants dependent upon them. According to the statement of Marx the peasant had to carry «a mass of duties, exactions and taxes.»

The position of the peasantry in the other German states was equally hard. In Austria and Hungary the peasantry was subjected to an even greater feudal oppression. The large landlord estates were cultivated by the *corvée* labour of serf-peasants—the peasant had virtually no time left for attending to his own economy. The peasants were also compelled to pay a «tithe» for the benefit of the church as well as carry the burden of state taxes. Thus, «the feudal-vassals», peasants of Hungary, had to give away one tenth of the harvest to the Catholic Church, and one ninth to the landlord for whom they had to work in addition to that one hundred days a year. Besides that the landlord acted as the judge over the peasants and had the power of driving the peasants off the land at his own will.

In Austria and Hungary the peasant question was interwoven with the national question. Frequently the landlords belonged to one nationality and the peasants to another. Thus, in Transylvania the landlords were Hungarians and the peasants Roumanians; in Galicia the landlords were Poles while the peasants were Ruthenians. The peasant who struggled against the landlord saw in him not only his class enemy but also the representative of an alien nationality which oppressed him.

In this way the class struggle assumed the form of national hatred. These national quarrels were skillfully utilized by the Austrian government; while defending the interests of the landlords it incited one nationality against the other and hindered the creation of a united revolutionary front for struggle against feudalism and absolutism.

The conditions of peasants in the southern and western German states were easier, as they profited most by the influence of the Great French Revolution. So, for example, in the Rhine district of Prussia already at the time of the Napoleonic domination, serfdom was abolished and the civil code was introduced.

In Baden, Hessen, Württemberg, Hanover, the annulment of feudal duties took place shortly after 1830.

But nevertheless, the general number of free peasant property owners was still small throughout Germany. The basic mass of the peasantry continued to suffer under the yoke of feudal duties which were arousing a deep dissatisfaction and ferment among the peasantry.

However, the great variety in the position of various groups of peasantry in relation to the landlord, the differentiation which began in the midst of the peasantry and finally the minute subdivision of the country into separate small possessions, was interfering with the

<sup>1</sup> We deal more in detail about the «American» way of development of capitalism in the agricultural economy in the chapter on the United States.

creation of a united front of the peasants against the landlords, weakening the revolutionary struggle of the peasantry against the remnants of feudalism, and against the autocratic monarchy.

Only the determined revolutionary struggle of the working class, and only its leadership, (hegemony), could stir up the entire peasantry and set into motion the full force of its accumulated revolutionary energy, as was done during the 1905 revolution in Russia.

**The Economic  
and Political  
Might of the  
Landowning  
Nobility.**

The class against which the peasantry was struggling was also strong.

The political influence of the landowning nobility was based upon their economic power. Unlimited, absolute monarchy was preserved in the largest states of Germany—Prussia and Austria. The Prussian king and the Austrian Emperor were the guardians of the interests of the master-landlords. The country was ruled through a numerous army of government officials appointed by the king. Just as in tsarist Russia during the rule of Nicholas the First, so in Prussia, in the twenties and thirties military discipline reigned supreme. Not the slightest criticism of government decrees was permitted. The Prussian press was terrorized. Criticism of the existing order appeared occasionally only in the literary productions.

The power of the Austrian emperor was also unlimited. The leader of the Austrian policy, Minister Metternich was the head of the all-European reaction and the soul of the Holy Alliance. Metternich viewed every movement of the people as something equivalent to a plague or a fire which had to be strangled with its first appearance. The emperor of Austria himself was a typical bureaucratic official. «I do not need people of learning», — he stated in a speech addressed to the teachers of public schools. «I only need that you should be loyal subjects and that you should train students also to be loyal subjects.»

An unlimited arbitrary rule reigned throughout Austria. The press was subjected to a strict censorship. The educational system was under the supervision of the Catholic Church. The slightest attempt of the opposition, every manifestation of dissatisfaction was severely suppressed. Together with tsarist Russia, Austria was the main initiator of the landlords reaction, which set in in Europe after the defeat of bourgeois Napoleonic France.

In Austria the yoke of absolutism was interwoven with national oppression. The Austrian-Germans, Hungarians, Czechs, Slovaks, Serbians, Poles, Croats, Rumanians, Italians, such was the varied national composition of the population of Austria. «A ragged empire»—such was the name given to the empire of the Hapsburgs.<sup>1</sup>

In Austria proper the Germans played the leading rôle and oppressed other nationalities, in Hungary the same role was played by the Hungarians. In their hands were concentrated large land possessions, they occupied high positions in the state apparatus, or a prominent place in commerce and industry. The rest of the population, the other nationalities were doomed to the difficult position of serf-peasants or

<sup>1</sup> *Hapsburgs* — the family name of Austrian Emperors.



of brutally exploited workers. For this reason the class struggle was interwoven with the struggle against national oppression. Elected institutions were introduced only in some of the states of south-western Germany where the feudal remnants had been undermined already at the time of the Great French Revolution during the Napoleonic epoch (Württemberg, Baden). However, only the well-to-do, rich people and landlords had the right of suffrage.

**The Development of Capitalism in Industry.**

In the beginning of the 19th century Germany was still a predominantly agrarian country. There were very few large cities. Only the city of Berlin had a population of over 250,000 people. Cities with a population from 1 to 3 thousand people predominated. German

industry was based essentially on hand technique. Guild artisanship still played a significant rôle in the cities. However, alongside with it and on the basis of it, capitalist manufacture was developing. In Berlin and Vienna guild masters could be frequently found who had in their shops a considerable number of apprentices and in addition were also distributing work to thirty or forty artisans who were working at home, receiving their pay on the basis of piece work. In a word, industry in Germany was still living in that *manufacturing period* which we have already observed in France on the eve of the Great Revolution. The absence of a united internal market in Germany served as the greatest hindrance for the development of industry and commerce.

The small states of Germany were separated from each other by a wall of tariff duties. Every one of them had their own special measures of length and weight, their special money system, their courts, and their laws.

In addition to that the difficult position of the peasantry which constituted the majority of the population also greatly curtailed the internal market. The means of communication were very poor; there were still no railways, and the byways were in a terrible condition. The absence of that general national state power which would be recognized abroad and which would not only be able to defend German goods from competition of other powers within the country, but also to win markets for the sale of these goods abroad, served as a great hindrance for the development of industry and commerce.

In general the feudal subdivision and feudal order in Germany constituted a great hindrance along the path of its further capitalist development.

**The Customs and Commercial Union of 1834.**

Under such conditions of economic and political subdivision of the country, the tariff unification of Germany played an important rôle in its economic development. In 1834 a Customs and Commercial Union

was concluded between 18 of the largest German states, with the exception of Austria. At the head of this union stood Prussia as the largest and the most developed capitalist German state. A common custom was established together with a common treasury: the tariff barriers within the union were destroyed.

In this way the internal market for German industry and commerce was extended. The destruction of tariff barriers also hastened the building of railways which connected various districts of Germany.

### **The Beginning of the Indus- trial Revolu- tion.**

The creation of the Customs Union (1834) and the extension of the internal market served as an impetus for hastening the development of large industry.

The beginning of the Industrial Revolution in Germany took place in the forties. Thus, for instance, while in 1824 Germany had only two steam engines, in 1837 in Prussia alone there were already 300 steam-engines and ten years later in 1847 the number increased to 1,139. During the period from 1830—1850 the output of coal trebled; the output of cast iron doubled; not only the metallurgical but the textile industry as well was developing; the yearly consumption of cotton increased from 8—9 thousand to 14, 500 tons.

In 1846 there were already 314 weaving mills on the territory of the Customs and Commercial Union which had 800 mechanical and 34,000 hand-machines and over 45,000 workers.

The railway lines also grew. The first railroad was built in Prussia in 1835, one year after the establishment of the Customs of Commercial Union; in 1845 the length of the railway lines exceeded 2,000 kilometers, and in 1850, 6,000 kilometers.

However, in all these fields of national economy the industrial revolution was retarded by a number of feudal remnants and thus it continued through several decades. In spite of the fact that the production of machines began in Germany manufacture in the forties still remained the predominant form of industry. The number of handicraftsmen artisans — considerably exceeded the number of shop-factory workers, even in the most developed industrial districts of Germany: in the Rhine district, Prussia, Saxony, and Silesia.

### **The Bourgeoi- sie.**

The German bourgeoisie was growing and developing alongside with the growth of industry. However, on account of the weak development of large industry in Germany the German bourgeoisie was much weaker than the French and the English bourgeoisie of that time. There were very few large manufactures in Germany.

The German bourgeoisie had very many reasons for dissatisfaction with the existing order. The developing industry of Germany demanded a wide internal market. But the feudal remnants interfered with its extension. The majority of the population consisted of peasants but the yoke of feudal duties and poverty deprived them of their purchasing power. It was impossible to think of a struggle for the foreign markets and the conclusion of advantageous commercial agreements as long as Germany remained politically subdivided. To the extent that Germany was developing economically, her political unification became an immediate and essential necessity for the bourgeoisie.

The petty interference of the government of the nobility in the industrial-commercial activity of the bourgeoisie was also hindering its development. The bourgeoisie demanded the full freedom of economic activity, the annulment of all antiquated laws which hindered the development of capitalism. The bourgeoisie was also dissatisfied with the fact that the finances were under the full and uncontrolled domination of the nobility government. Money was spent not in the way and not for the purposes which were considered necessary by the bourgeoisie. The German bourgeoisie was striving to participate in the political power, in the administration of the country. Its dissatisfaction expressed itself in the form of an opposition movement.

However, the opposition of the German bourgeoisie of the 19th century was flabby, half-hearted, cowardly.

This was due to the fact that the German bourgeoisie was developing at a time when the working class in Europe had already appeared

on the political arena. The Lyons uprising of 1830, the Chartist movement in England, the first steps of the German proletariat — demonstrated practically to the German bourgeoisie that behind its back stands a new powerful enemy. The German bourgeoisie had not yet succeeded in defeating its old enemy, the feudal order, was not yet successful in clearing the ground for the development of capitalism when it found its own grave-digger — the proletariat had already come onto the scene.

«The German bourgeoisie was developing so weakly, cowardly and slowly, that at the period when it was fighting against feudalism and absolutism it saw itself as an enemy opposed to the proletariat and to all the strata of the population, whose interests and ideas were closely related to the proletariat» (*Marx*). The fear of the proletariat, was the main reason for the cowardice and half-heartedness of the German bourgeoisie.

The German bourgeoisie, frightened by the European labour movement, sought assistance and help against the proletariat from the same old power and the same landowning nobility against which it was carrying on a struggle for its own interests. That is why the German bourgeoisie dreamt not of a revolution but of an *agreement*, a compromise with the old power, about certain reforms in the existing order and not of its radical change.

**Two Possible  
Ways for the  
Unification of  
Germany.**

This duplicity and half-heartedness of the German bourgeoisie conditioned its attitude *towards the cardinal question of the German bourgeois revolution — the question of the unification of Germany.*

Under the correlation of class forces at that time the unification of Germany could take place in two ways. The first way was the path of the revolution from below which would determinedly sweep aside the entire feudal order and as a result of that, create a single all German democratic republic. In view of the cowardice of the German bourgeoisie, the leadership (hegemony) of such a revolution had to come into the hands of the German proletariat.

Another way — the way of the unification of Germany (from the top) around one or more of the large German states — Prussia or Austria. This way of unification (from the top) inevitably had to strengthen the leading position of the nobility-landlords in as much as in both Prussia and Austria the state power was in their hands. Only the first way — the way of the people's revolution (from below) — could determinedly and consistently purge Germany of all the remnants of feudalism and create the all-German democratic republic in order that on its basis «after the fall of the reactionary classes in Germany, the fight against the bourgeoisie itself may immediately begin». (*Communist Manifesto*).

But the German bourgeoisie, fearing the development of the proletarian movement, preferred the way of unification (from the top) around the most powerful and most developed capitalist German state. Such a state was Prussia. The struggle between these two ways of unification of Germany — the revolutionary path of unification «from below» and the path of unification «from the top» — was sharpened more and more as the problem of unification was placed on the order of the day.

**The City Petty Bourgeoisie.**

In the middle of the 19th century the petty bourgeoisie still constituted the most numerous part of the city population of Germany. It consisted mainly of guild masters, small traders and shopkeepers. The life of these small burghers <sup>1</sup> (city petty bourgeoisie) proceeded within the narrow framework of daily cares and habits. These petty bourgeois circles of small German cities were characterized by habitual routine, conservativeness and a narrow horizon of thought. Many of the guild masters-artisans dreamed about the restoration of the old guild orders which were constantly decomposing under the force of capitalist development. Among the artisans themselves a relentless struggle was going on between the well-to-do guild masters and apprentices whose position was approaching that of hired workers. The difficult position of the petty bourgeoisie, its hatred for large capital which was bankrupting it, its political position without any rights, the yoke of absolutism and bureaucracy was arousing in the ranks of the petty bourgeoisie a revolutionary ferment. In the struggle against big capital it could become an ally of the proletariat, marching under its leadership. On the other hand, this striving to maintain its position of property owners drove the petty bourgeoisie into the embraces of the big bourgeoisie. As a result of this we shall see that in the 1848 revolution the petty bourgeoisie of Germany played a wavering, treacherous rôle.

**The Working Class.**

In the forties of the 19th century the working class of Germany was still not numerous. Thus, in Prussia the workers constituted only about 30% of the entire population. The main mass of the population consisted not of the shop-factory workers, but of artisan apprentices of small shops or of handicraftsmen-artisans, who worked for the merchants and frequently had not as yet broken away from agricultural economy. Thus, for example, in 78,000 factories which existed in Prussia in 1846 there were 550,000 factory workers. At the same time Prussia had about 460 master-artisans and independent enterprises which employed only 380,000 learners and apprentices.

In a word, «the working class in Germany is in its social and political development as far behind that of England and France as the German bourgeoisie is behind the bourgeoisie of these countries» (Engels). *It was still unable to assume the hegemony, to become the leader of the people's revolution, was not able to lead the general democratic struggle against the remnants of feudalism and autocracy.* It still did not have either a clear consciousness of its historic tasks, nor a mass proletarian party which could direct its revolutionary struggle.

**The Uprising of the Silesian Weavers.**

The beginning of the industrial revolution brought in its wake in Germany, the same as in other countries, an increased exploitation of female and child labour, the lowering of wages, and the lengthening of the working day for adult workers.

The position of the handicraftsmen-artisans was particularly difficult; their wages were constantly lowered. The machine was driving

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<sup>1</sup> *Burgher* (originating from the German word *Burg* — city), a city man.

out artisanship; working day and night together with their families, the weavers and spinners of Silesia were barely managing to avoid death from starvation. The enterprises were widely applying a system of payment in kind of a poor quality and at exceedingly high prices. In some of the districts of Silesia virtually one twelfth of the population died out on account of hunger and disease. Finally in 1844 the patience of the Silesian weavers was exhausted and they rebelled against their exploiters. The struggle started when the police arrested and lashed one of the workers who began to sing a song of protest against their yoke under the window of the manufacturer.

Here are the words of this song:

The Zwanzigers are murderers and beasts,  
Unscrupulous despoilers—  
Their servants are the brave police  
Who bludgeon honest toilers...  
You, brutal curs, you, filthy knaves,  
Who watch the bosses purses,  
You help to rob the helpless slaves  
And richly win their curses.

A crowd of indignant workers came to the manufacturer and demanded increased rates. The manufacturer drove out the workers. Following this the enraged crowd broke up his home, tore up his accounting books, notes, raided the warehouses and destroyed the reserve goods which were kept there. On the following day about 3,000 workers marched to the home of the Dirig brothers — another manufacturer. The troops sent for the suppression of the uprising were at first compelled to retreat after killing eleven and wounding twenty-four weavers. The workers attacked soldiers with axes and bricks. However, the troops after receiving four regiments reinforcements of infantry dispersed the crowd, with cannon and suppressed the uprising. Arrests and severe persecution of the workers began. Eighty three workers were tried and sentenced to severe punishment, up to ten years of hard labour in the penitentiary.

As we see, the Silesian weavers as yet put forward no political demands. The uprising was of a spontaneous character, it was an explosion of indignation of the starved and tormented workers. But the significance of the Silesian weavers' uprising was very great. The news about it spread throughout the whole of Germany. It openly demonstrated that the labour movement was beginning in Germany and that a relentless class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie was taking place.

«The Federation  
of the Just»  
and Wilhelm  
Weitling.

Only a few, the most advanced workers of that time, had a clear consciousness of their class division. The German workers were organizing mutual aid societies, workers' associations which resemble trade unions, but they did not have any political organization.

The first circles, connected with the propagation of socialist ideas among the German workers, were formed abroad — in France, in Switzerland, and Belgium. German artisans went abroad in accordance with the custom which prevailed among artisans to travel in various localities for the purpose of better studying their trade. The more advanced workers who were subjected to police persecution at home would also manage to go abroad. In the foreign countries the German workers became acquainted with and established connections with contemporary

socialism. The ideas of St. Simon, Fourier, Owen and other utopian socialists exerted great influence.

Among the secret circles and unions «The Federation of the Just» which was organized in Paris and in which the artisans predominated was particularly prominent. One of the leaders of «The Federation of the Just» was *Wilhelm Weitling* — a tailor by trade. Weitling's conceptions were strongly influenced by the Utopian socialists, in part by Fourier. Just as they, Weitling drew a fantastic picture of the future communist society and believed in the possibility of its immediate realization.

However, in contrast to the peaceful teachings of Utopian socialism, Weitling believed in the necessity of a revolution. «The best plan we shall have to write in blood», stated Weitling. He ridiculed the hopes of Fourier for the appearance of a millionaire benefactor. The realization of his plan Weitling connected, not with the

rich, but with the struggle of the dispossessed strata of the population. But Weitling saw the fighters for socialism not in the shop-factory proletariat, but in the impoverished sections of the population, tramps, beggars, and even in thieves and robbers. In the opinion of Weitling they would rise the sooner for the destruction of the capitalist order the more extreme was their poverty, the deeper became their despair.

Weitling did not understand either the laws of capitalist development or the necessity of a transition period between capitalism and socialism. He considered unnecessary any political struggle within the framework of capitalist society. In the opinion of Weitling, the Germany of that time had to jump into a kingdom of communism directly from artisanship and serfdom.

This idea of Weitling could not, in the actual practice of life, play the leading rôle in the class struggle of the proletariat. It is not without reason that Marx compared Weitling's production with «Seven league boots of the

proletariat»: by this idea it was possible to judge the weakness of the working class of that time as well as of the coming great development of the labour movement.

#### Marx and Engels

In the forties of the 19th century utopian socialism was replaced by scientific communism. Its founders were Marx and Engels.

Karl Marx (1818—1883) was born in the family of an attorney in the city of Triers, Rhine province — an advanced industrial district of contemporary Germany. After finishing the middle school, Marx entered the Berlin University and undertook a thorough study of contemporary German philosophy adhering to the left tendencies of philosophical thought. In finishing the University Marx returned to his native land in the Rhine province.

Here in this industrial district with the most advanced bourgeoisie, Marx became an active participant in the political struggle and immediately gained prominence as a brilliant journalist and publicist.



Karl Marx.

He was invited to be the editor of the «*Neue Rheinische Zeitung*», the organ of the advanced circles of the Rhine bourgeoisie. Marx directed the «*Neue Rheinische Zeitung*» along lines sharply antagonistic to the government. The circulation of the paper immediately increased, but at the same time the persecution of Marx by the police began. The brilliant attacks of Marx against censorship, his articles illuminating the difficult position of the Moselle peasants, finally led to the closing of the paper in April 1843. Marx left for Paris.

His stay in Paris exerted a great influence upon young Marx. From a revolutionary democrat Marx became a consistent Communist. The French epoch of the July monarchy — this «kingdom of bankers» — glaringly demonstrated to Marx all the contradictions of the capitalist order and the absolute inevitability of the socialist revolution. The study of classical German philosophy, a close acquaintance with various tendencies of French and English Socialism and their criticism; a thoughtful study of the rich experience of past class struggle; profound work in the sphere of economic sciences, among them English political economy; a close contact with the contemporary French and German labour movement — all of this made of Marx a consistent revolutionary Communist.



Engels.

Already during those years Marx in his articles predicted the inevitability and nearness of the revolution in Germany. Already at that time he stated that the German bourgeoisie, to the extent that it began the struggle against the working class, cannot become the advanced class in the coming revolution as it was in France in 1789. Here Marx also pointed out the historic rôle of the proletariat which is called upon to destroy the capitalist society. «In Germany is being formed a new class, the proletariat, which strives for the destruction of all classes, which does not demand for itself any special rights, because in relation to it all rights have been violated... In order to free itself it must inevitably secure freedom from all the other social strata and in this free all the other strata.» In this manner Marx was forming the basic proposition of scientific Communism. At the same time began the close friendship of Marx with Engels, who became his friend and comrade-in-arms in the prolonged struggle for the cause of the working class.

*Friedrich Engels* (1820—1895) descended from a rich merchant family of the same Rhine district. The father of Friedrich Engels wanted to make him a merchant and compelled him to work in a com-



mercial office in Bremen — one of the largest cities of contemporary Germany. Here Engels had an opportunity of getting acquainted with all the features of the capitalist society. Alongside with this, while in military service in Berlin, Engels became acquainted with the German philosophy of the period adjoining the left tendencies of, contemporary philosophic thought.

Shortly afterwards, in connection with his father's affairs, young Engels left for England — that advanced capitalist country of the 19th century. Life in England had the same significance for Engels as the stay in Paris for Marx. Later Engels wrote that Manchester «put him face to face» with the fact that in the final analysis the economic relations are the determining factor, that it is exactly they that form the basis for the origin of classes and class contradictions. The ever-sharpening contradictions of the capitalist order, crises, unemployment, the impoverishment of the proletariat, were then seen most glaringly, particularly in England — the most developed capitalist country of that time. This made an indelible impression upon Engels. The thirties and forties of the 19th century were the years of revolutionary Chartism in England. Engels became closely connected with the participants in the Chartist movement and began to write for the Chartist paper «The Northern Star». In England Engels also studied political economy and became acquainted with the ideas of French and English utopian socialism, including Robert Owen. As a result of this, Engels became a consistent revolutionary Communist.

«The fusion of Socialism with Chartism will make the English working class the real ruler of England», wrote Engels.

In this way Engels, independent of Marx, arrived at some of the basic conceptions of scientific Communism.

In 1844 Engels spent about two weeks in Paris. Here his close friendship with Marx began. In the course of many years with untiring fervour and revolutionary energy they carried on a joint struggle for the cause of the working class, for the cause of a the world Socialist revolution.

Marx and Engels forged the theory and tactics of revolutionary Communism-Marxism in the course of a relentless struggle against various petty-bourgeois tendencies. Marx and Engels were not only the founders of scientific Communism, but throughout their entire life they participated directly in the labour movement, throughout their entire life they were untiring organizers and leaders of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat. Their teaching was not a dead letter, but a call to action and leadership, the unity of theory and practice of the proletarian revolution.

«Marx was before all else a revolutionary... Fighting was his element and he fought with a passion, a tenacity and a success such as few could rival», stated Engels at his grave.

«The teaching of Marx is all-powerful, because it is correct. It is complete and consistent, giving to the people a complete world outlook, which cannot be reconciled with any superstition, with any reaction and with any defence of the bourgeois yoke. It is the legal heir of the best that was created by humanity in the 19th century in the shape of German philosophy, English political economy, and French Socialism» (*Lenin*).

**The Communist  
League.**

When the Government of Louis-Philippe deported Marx from France in 1845, he went to Belgium and here undertook, the creation of an international Communist organization. Jointly with Engels, who lived in London, Marx established contact with revolutionary organizations of France, England, Germany, Belgium and Switzerland. Marx and Engels subjected to severe criticism, all the weak points of utopian Socialism and on this ground they sharply parted with Weitling. In the Summer of 1847 the international Congress of revolutionaries was called in London. Here was created the Communist League — the first international Communist organization. The Communist League set as its aim the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of proletarian rule, the destruction of the old capitalist society, based on the class struggle, and the creation of a new society without classes on the basis of collective ownership.

The Communist League chose as its slogan the famous words: *«proletarians of all countries, unite»*. This slogan which sharply emphasised the proletarian class character of the League was proposed by Marx.

In November-December of 1847 a second Congress of the Communist League was called in London. At this Congress Marx was entrusted to write the programme of the League. This programme was the famous *«Communist Manifesto»*.

**The Communist  
Manifesto.**

*«The Communist Manifesto»* was published in February 1848 shortly prior to the February revolution in France. It was written by Marx on the basis of a draft composed by Engels.

In the *«Manifesto»* is given the lead which makes it possible to orientate oneself in the great variety and contradictions of human society, to disclose the lawfulness of the most entangled and the most complex social events and for this reason to determine with scientific precision the results towards which they can lead. This directing line is *the class struggle*. *«The history of all hitherto existing societies»*, states the *«Manifesto»*, *«is the history of class struggles.»*

«Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild master and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended either in the revolutionary reconstruction of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes...

«The modern bourgeois society that has sprouted from the ruins of the feudal society, has not done away with class antagonism. It has but established new classes, new conditions of oppression, new forms of struggle in place of the old ones.

«Our epoch, the epoch of the bourgeoisie, possesses, however, this distinctive feature: it has simplified the class antagonism. Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, or into two great classes directly facing each other — the bourgeoisie and proletariat...

«In its time in destroying the feudal patriarchal relation and establishing the capitalist society the bourgeoisie has played a most revolutionary rôle.

«The bourgeoisie with the hands of the proletariat during its rule of scarce one hundred years has created more massive and more colossal productive forces than have all preceding generations together. Subjection of nature's forces to man, machinery, application of chemistry to industry and agriculture, steam-navigation, railways, electric telegraphs, clearing of whole continents for cultivation, canalization of rivers» — such is the result of the activity of the bourgeoisie. But after creating these colossal productive forces, bourgeois society is not able to cope with them. The commercial-industrial crises systematically shake up bourgeois society. «In these crises a great part not only of the existing products, but also of the previously created productive forces are periodically destroyed». The bourgeois society becomes a hinderance to the further development of the productive forces. «The conditions of bourgeois society are too narrow to comprise the wealth created by them.» This society is doomed and a new class, created by bourgeois society itself — the proletariat — comes out as its gravedigger. Within the bourgeois frame of society the proletariat carries on an uninterrupted struggle against the bourgeoisie «up to the point that was to break out into open revolution and where the violent overthrow of the bourgeoisie lays the foundation for the sway of the proletariat» and «builds a new socialist society.» The fall of the bourgeoisie and the «victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable.» «Only the proletariat can defeat the bourgeoisie. Of all the classes that stand face to face with the bourgeoisie to day, *the proletariat alone is a really revolutionary class.* The other classes decay and finally disappear in the face of modern industry; the proletariat is its special and essential product.

«The lower middle class, the small manufacturers, the shopkeeper, the artisan, the peasant, all these fight against the bourgeoisie to save from extinction their existence as fractions of the middle class. «If by chance they are revolutionary, they are so only in view of their impending transfer into the proletariat; they thus defend not their present, but their future interests; they desert their own standpoint to place themselves at that of the proletariat».

In this manner the Communist Manifesto constitutes a brief scientific formulation of the class struggle of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie which leads to the forceful revolution and the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship for the building up of the classless Communist society.

*The teachings of Marx of the dictatorship of the proletariat, his clarification of the world-historic rôle of the proletariat as the creator of the socialist society, is the corner stone of Marxism and has world significance.* «He who recognizes only the class struggle is not yet a Marxist», writes Lenin, «a Marxist is only he who extends the recognition of the class struggle up to the recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat. In this lies the sharp distinction between a Marxist and a common, petty (and even a big) bourgeois.»

The Marxian teachings on the proletarian dictatorship were further developed by Lenin in the application of the new conditions of the class struggle in the epoch of imperialism and proletarian revolution.

The «Manifesto» gives clear directives regarding the tactics of the Communist Party. «The Communists», states the Manifesto, «have

no interests separate and apart from those of the proletariat as a whole...

«The Communists... are distinguished by this only... they point out and bring to the front the common interests of the entire proletariat independently of nationality. In the various stages of development which the struggle of the working class against the bourgeoisie has to pass through they always and everywhere represent the interests of the movement as a whole.

«The Communists, therefore, are on the one hand, practically the most advanced and resolute section of the working class parties of every country, that section which pushes forward all others; on the other hand, theoretically, they have over the great mass of the proletariat the advantage of clearly understanding the line of march, the conditions, and the ultimate general results of the proletarian movement.

«The immediate aim of the Communists... Formation of the proletariat into a class, overthrow of the bourgeois supremacy, conquest of political power by the proletariat.»

«The Communists», states the «Manifesto», towards the end, «disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communist revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win.

«Workingmen of all countries, unite!»

The significance of the «Communist Manifesto» is very great. In the «Manifesto» for the first time «with the clarity of a genius is brilliantly pictured a new world conception, the theory of the class struggle and the world-historic revolutionary rôle of the proletariat — the creator of a new Communist society» (*Lenin*).

This was the first clear formulation of the class ideology of the proletariat. «The Communist Manifesto» preserves up until now its great international revolutionary significance, and the proletariat of the entire world carries on its revolutionary struggle under its banner. The basic ideas of the «Communist Manifesto» formed the basis of the programme and tactics of the Third Communist International — the international militant party of the proletariat.

## § 22. The Revolution of 1848 in Germany.

### The Immediate Causes of the Revolution.

«Germany stands on the eve of a bourgeois revolution», states the «Communist Manifesto». History has proved that Marx and Engels were not mistaken in this. The infestation of the potato crop, poor harvest and industrial crisis of 1847 greatly sharpened all the class contradictions. The conditions of the peasantry, the workers and petty bourgeoisie became unbearable. The dissatisfaction of the big bourgeoisie was also growing.

The difficult position of the country and partly the financial crisis compelled the Prussian king to appeal to the bourgeoisie for assistance. But they sharply refused the request for money until a constitution

were introduced in Prussia. The king refused decisively. «I shall never permit», he stated, «that between the Lord and our country should arise a written slip of paper.» However, the situation in the country sharpened. On account of hunger, the high cost of living and unemployment, mass movements of the people arose. On account of the industrial crisis one factory after another shut down. Thousands of workers were thrown out into the streets. Wage-earning stopped while on account of poor harvest over a number of years and the infestation of potato crops the prices on products were rising with horrifying rapidity. A measure of potatoes which sold in 1845 for 41 kronen rose to almost 3 gulden.<sup>1</sup> Already in April 1845 «potato riots» took place on the streets of Berlin. The city poor raided shops and seized food products. The streets of Berlin were patrolled by police dispersing crowds with their swords.

The peasant population was also revolting. For example in Styria the peasants, enraged by the merciless collection of taxes, were gathering in armed crowds refusing to pay taxes and to carry out corvée service.

The February revolution in France was a spark which set Germany afire. The news of the barricade fights in Paris and the proclamation of the Republic in France with representation of workers in the government excited the broad circles of the German population. A wave of gatherings, demonstrations, and meetings rolled over the entire country.

In the Southwestern states of Germany the movement flared up already at the end of February. Mass meetings took place in Baden, and Württemberg. Demands were put forward for the freedom of assembly and unions, freedom of press, the introduction of universal suffrage, the calling of a Representative Assembly for all Germans. Shouts of «Long Live the Republic» were heard. The mass movement of the peasants began simultaneously with the revolt in the city. The peasants attacked the castles of the nobility, burnt documents and books which recorded feudal duties. At times, under the pressure of the peasantry, the lords themselves burnt these records. The flame of fires illuminated the whole of Germany with a revolutionary glow.

In the beginning of March the movement spread to Bavaria and Saxony.

In the middle of March the liberal-bourgeois (the so-called «March») ministry was organized in the majority of the small and middle sized states of Germany. At the same time from among the representatives of the liberal bourgeoisie was formed a committee for the preparation of the calling of the General German Constituent Assembly. However, the decisive significance for the German revolution lay in the question of how the events would proceed in the largest states — Austria and Prussia.

#### **The March Revolution in Austria.**

Already in the beginning of March the revolutionary movement engulfed the Austrian possessions. A struggle for national independence was going on in Hungary, amongst the Czechs and in the Italian possessions of the Hapsburgs. The national-revolutionary movement assumed great proportions in Hungary which was virtually a semi-colony of Austria. The Austrian monarchy of the Hapsburgs together with the Catholic church, constituted here the main bulwark of the feudal yoke.

The leader of the national-revolutionary movement in Hungary, *Kossuth* (1802—1894) came out sharply against the entire system of Metternich and demanded the creation of a responsible ministry in

<sup>1</sup> *Gulden* — about 40 cents of the pre-war rate of exchange. One gulden has 60 kronen.

Hungary, composed of Hungarians. The Hungarian Diet directed a special deputation to the Austrian Emperor demanding the introduction of a constitution in all the Austrian possessions. The Diet address was sent from Vienna to Prague where the Czechs were carrying on the struggle for national independence.

A revolutionary movement also began in Upper Italy. The Austrian domination, which laid a heavy yoke on Lombardy had been provoking the indignation of the people for a long time. Already on the 22nd of February, by the order of Metternich, martial law was declared in the entire Lombardian-Venetian district. General Radetzky was appointed the military dictator in Milan. Constant encounters were taking place between Austrian detachments and the population of Milan. The news of the revolution in France and in separate States of Germany accelerated the explosion of the national revolutionary movement in the Italian district. Stormy meetings and demonstrations began to take place in Milan. In defiance of General Radetzky's order to forcefully disperse the people the streets of Milan were covered with barricades. A bloody battle began between their defenders and the detachments of General Radetzky. Victory remained on the side of the rebels. Radetzky was compelled to withdraw his troops not only from Milan but also from beyond the boundaries of Lombardy. The Austrian garrisons were also driven out from other Italian cities. A revolutionary government was formed in Venice. The question was raised of uniting the whole of Italy for struggle against Austrian oppression.

In March 1848, the revolutionary movement also engulfed Vienna. Already at the beginning of March, stormy meetings and demonstrations took place in the city; the main participants were city petty bourgeoisie, the student youth, artisans, and workers. In the beginning the big bourgeoisie, with the exception of its financial upper strata, the bankers and stock-exchange brokers, joined the movement. The Vienna bourgeoisie «had never seen workingmen acting as a class, or stand up for their own distinct class interests» (*Engels*). And for this reason it went together with them against the hateful reactionary landlords' government of Metternich.

«Down with Metternich!» «Long live the constitution!» shouted the demonstrators who gathered on March 13th on the square of the City Hall. Troops were moved against the people. Two volleys were fired dispersing the demonstrators and leaving a number of dead and wounded on the square. But while the troops were dispersing the people in one place they were gathering in another. Armed encounters were taking place everywhere, the streets of Vienna were covered with a network of barricades. A bourgeois national guard was formed in Vienna. Its representative sent a deputation to the emperor with a demand for the removal of Metternich and the withdrawal of troops from Vienna. The deputation of students demanded arms. The palace was surrounded by people. The troops guarding the palace refused to shoot at the unarmed crowd. The government was forced to grant concessions. Metternich was removed and fled from Vienna. A ministry of liberal officials was created in Vienna and the emperor gave a promise to grant a constitution. All the citizens of Vienna were permitted to join the national guards and receive arms from the city arsenal. During the same evening the student youth organized its own «Academic Legion.» The revolutionary movement gained the first victory. However, this victory was far from sufficient because the monarchy remained and the entire former apparatus of oppression was left untouched. The overthrow of the old regime required a new, a more decisive offensive

of the masses. But the bourgeoisie had already began to manifest its fear of the masses and endeavoured to hold them back from general offensive.

When the workers of the suburbs learnt about the revolt which was taking place in Vienna they marched into the city. However, the city bourgeoisie closed the gates and did not permit workers to enter the centre of the city. The indignation of the workers was turned against the bourgeoisie. In the suburbs of Fünfhaus and Sechshaus the workers set fire to the houses of the manufacturers who were particularly vicious in the oppression of workers and destroyed machines in a number of factories. At the same time workers destroyed the city toll-gates where customs were collected artificially raising prices on products brought into the city.

The government sent the bourgeois city armed forces — the National Guard — for the suppression of revolts in the workers' suburbs. Several hundred workers were arrested. This still further deepened the gulf between the bourgeoisie and the workers.

The government in observing the cowardice of the bourgeoisie and its fear of the masses decided to use force. The emperor entrusted the actual power to General Windischgratz, appointing him a military dictator of Vienna. Martial law was prolonged. At the end of March the government issued a reactionary law destroying freedom of the press. In April 1848 the constitution was published which established the indirect elections to the National Assembly of Austria, preserving for the government the right to veto the laws passed by it, depriving the workers of suffrage rights and rejecting ahead of time the possibility of annulling feudal duties without compensation. In striving to disarm the forces of the revolution, the government issued alongside with this a decree disbanding the Academic Legion and the Central Committee of the National Guard. These measures provoked the indignation of the workers and the petty bourgeoisie. On May 15th, 1848, gigantic crowds of people moved on the palace demanding the annulment of the decree. The Academic Legion of student youth came into the streets. At the first sound of its drums thousands of workers armed with picks, axes, and crow-bars joined the movement. The frightened Government was this time forced to retreat. The frightened emperor fled from Vienna. The day of May 15th and the flight of the emperor made an indelible impression on the big bourgeoisie. Thru fear of the workers it went over to the side of reaction. The central committee of the Vienna National Guard, which consisted mainly of representatives of the bourgeoisie, voluntarily disbanded itself.

This gave courage to the government. On May 26th it issued anew a decree on the disbanding of the Academic Legion. However, this decree only provoked a new wave of indignation. Crowds of workers poured into the city. Detachments of National Guards consisting of the workers from suburbs also moved on Vienna contrary to the orders of reactionary officers. In some places the gates were closed but they were opened by force. Vienna was covered with barricades, behind which stood thick lines of defenders — workers and petty bourgeoisie. Vienna was transformed into an armed camp. The government could rely only on 8,000 soldiers who were powerless to cope with the revolt.



It was compelled to concede. The troops were recalled and the decree disbanding the Academic Legion was recalled. Victory was on the side of workers and petty bourgeoisie. A «Committee of Public Safety» was organized consisting of representatives of the petty bourgeoisie. The administration at Vienna virtually passed into its hands. In the beginning of June, under pressure of the workers, a law was passed extending suffrage rights to workers for participation in the Austrian National Assembly. However, the petty bourgeoisie which wavered between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat was still not in a position to take the leadership of the movement into its own hands. The workers had a very obscure and hazy conception as to the ways and aims of the class struggle. Workers did not even demand the admission of their representatives into the «Committee of Public Safety». They were not organized to such an extent as to be able to take the initiative into their hands to lead the peasantry with them and to carry on a decisive struggle against the waverings of the petty bourgeoisie.

Under such conditions their revolutionary energy did not find an outlet on account of the wavering and indecision of the petty bourgeoisie. «The Committee of Public Safety», consisting largely of the representatives of the petty bourgeoisie, while virtually having the power in its hands did not do anything in order to overthrow the monarchy and the bureaucratic government of the Hapsburgs. This continued to exist alongside with the «Committee of Public Safety» and did everything in its power to strengthen the forces of reaction and to gather military forces for the suppression of the revolutionary movement.

In this way the following condition of affairs prevailed in Austria towards June of 1848. The monarchy and the classes upon which it was basing itself were not by any means smashed but only frightened, which only intensified their hatred and desire to crush the revolution. The government of liberal bureaucrats which was sitting in Vienna craved for the return of the emperor to the capital from which he had fled after the May uprising. This government having in its hands the entire state machinery of oppression, untouched by the revolution, considered as its main task the preparation for the return of the emperor through the destruction of the revolutionary organization and the suppression of the forces of the petty bourgeoisie, workers and peasants. The revolutionary forces themselves were weakened due to their scattered character and the absence of centralization. «The Committee of Public Safety» could not play the rôle of a revolutionary center due to the waverings of the petty bourgeoisie and the weakness of the proletariat as the organizing and leading force. The scattered peasantry was therefore left to its own fate. At the same time the bourgeoisie were striving to come to an agreement with the emperor and landlords at any price. The correlation of forces was thus forming, not in favour of the revolution, but to the advantage of counter-revolution.

#### **The March Revolution in Prussia.**

In Prussia the revolutionary movement began first of all in the Rhine district, the most advanced industrially, and from there it moved forward reaching Berlin.

However, in Berlin from the very beginning a somewhat different correlation of forces than in Vienna was formed. The uprising of the

Silesian weavers (1844) and the labour movement in the Rhine district had shown to the Prussian bourgeoisie that it had at home, in Prussia itself, a growing deadly enemy. The February barricades in Paris and the demands of the French workers demonstrated to the Prussian bourgeoisie its own future.

«The bourgeoisie, frightened, not by what the German proletariat was but by what it threatened to become, and what the French proletariat had already become, saw its salvation in any kind, even in the most miserable, compromise with the monarchy and nobility» (*Engels*).

When the Prussian king, frightened by a number of demonstrations, promised to establish freedom of the press, to call together the people's representatives and to organise a new ministry, the bourgeoisie was only too ready to find satisfaction in these promises. When the Prussian minister declared that the king granted more than was demanded from him, one of the workers gave a determined reply: «Listen, old man, you don't understand that we have been given nothing».

And as a matter of fact the king, while giving promises to introduce the constitution, was at the same time concentrating troops in Berlin. On March 18th, 1848 when a big unarmed crowd gathered at the king's palace shots were fired and several men were killed. This shooting served as a spark which started the armed uprising.

«We have been betrayed. To arms! We shall revenge ourselves!» shouted the enraged crowd. Workers from the city poor armed themselves with all available weapons, raiding munition shops, making bullets, loading rifles, tearing up the bricks from the pavement and tiles from the roofs. Barricades were thrown up on the streets with great rapidity. Barricade fighting continued in Berlin during the entire day of March-18th, and during the night of March 19th. The majority of the fighters were workers and artisans. Up to 20,000 soldiers with rifles and cannons were thrown against the rebels. However, this did not frighten them. The troops were showered with bullets and bricks from the roofs of the houses and big granite plates were hurled from the sidewalks. In a number of places a hand-to-hand fight was going on. When one of the barricades was captured, its fighters would then shift over to another barricade and the battle flared up anew with the same energy. The thunder of cannons and gun shots, the shouts of struggle and the cries of wounded filled the streets of Berlin. A bloody fight was going on everywhere. On the morning of March 19th the rebels maintained all the basic positions. They were constantly reinforced with fresh forces while the troops were already very tired. The king was forced to order a retreat. He promised to call the National Assembly to draw up the constitution and proclaim the freedom of press declaring that henceforth «free Prussia» will take its place at the head of unified Germany.

On the same day a new («March») ministry, which along with the representatives of the nobility also included the representatives of the liberal bourgeoisie was formed.

On March 19th an official funeral of the rebels killed during the uprising took place. The demonstrators marched to the king's palace and demanded that the king should come out and stand bareheaded during the entire time while the funeral procession was passing.

#### **The Liberal Bourgeoisie in Power.**

A decisive blow against the nobility, a radical purging of Prussia from all the remnants of feudalism could be stuck out only by the offensive of workers and peasants who constituted the main driving forces of the revolution. But «the bourgeoisie were afraid to carry out the revolution to the end, it feared the independence of the proletariat.

it feared the full victory of the peasantry over their mediaeval exploiters the landlords» (*Lenin*).

When the Berlin workers came to the foreground, the bourgeoisie, frightened by the labour movement, preferred to make a deal with the reaction, to come to an agreement with the landlords. «On the very barricades of Berlin an alliance was concluded between the bourgeoisie and the defenders of the overthrown order» (*Engels*). Already on March 19th bourgeois armed forces which received arms from the state arsenal were organized in Berlin under the direction of the Berlin chief of police.

The demands of the workers at a huge gathering on March 26th for the organization of a ministry of labour with worker representatives, social insurance for aged workers and the calling of a Landtag on the basis of universal and direct election were answered by the bourgeoisie with an appeal to the government to return the troops to Berlin. Already on March 27th, the petition for the return of troops to Berlin had 14,000 signatures. A regiment of infantry and the Uhlan regiment were immediately recalled to Berlin.

The government was given a loan of 40 million marks, the greatest part of which was assigned for expenditures on the maintenance of troops.

The elections to the Prussian National Assembly were indirect elections, in order to prevent the masses from exerting direct influence on the final results.

As a result of this the National Assembly which opened in Berlin on May 22nd had in its composition only one worker and one artisan. It did not dare to establish itself as the Constituent Assembly and was stubbornly carrying out a policy of «agreement with the crown». The entire old state apparatus remained absolutely intact. Not a single official, not a single officer, not a single judge, not a single policeman was removed. Nothing was done to relieve the conditions of the working masses. The workers demands for increased wages or the curtailment of the working day, reinforced by strike, were answered by the bourgeoisie with cries about «worker despotism». In the city parliament it carried out a decision condemning a worker to imprisonment even for coming late to work.

The repeated demand of the workers for arms was sharply refused. The government was trying in every possible way to remove workers from Berlin under the pretext of finding work for them in the provinces.

In Berlin proper public work was organized only for 5,000 unemployed. Nevertheless the influx of workers was very great and hundreds of unemployed were besieging the city hall. The class contradictions between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat were sharpening more and more. Already in the beginning of June 48 bloody encounters took place between the workers and bourgeois armed forces of the city.

*The bourgeoisie also repulsed the peasantry from itself.* In coming to terms with the landlords, the Prussian bourgeoisie did not dare to place the question of freeing the peasants and of the full destruction of feudal duties without any compensation. «The French bourgeoisie began with the liberation of the peasantry. With the assistance

of the peasants it conquered Europe. While the Prussian bourgeoisie has sunk in its narrow limited interests to such an extent that it neglected even this ally and transformed it into a weapon for the feudal counter-revolution» (Marx).

The project on the annulment of the corvée was lost in the commissions together with the entire peasant question. The bourgeoisie remained deaf to the peasant movement and limited itself only to cancelling the right of the landlords to hunt on the land of the peasants.

At the same time the working class of Prussia was still unable to lead and direct the mass peasant movement.

The peasantry, left to itself, scattered and divided into different strata, was not in a position to struggle against the landlords. The Prussian landlords preserved their leading position and were preparing a determined offensive.

The Prussian bourgeoisie fearing the movement of the democratic masses (the proletariat and peasantry) repulsed from itself still another force which could help in the revolutionary transformation of Germany. This force was oppressed Poland. The revolution in Prussia gave an impetus to the national-liberation movement in Prussian Posen, in which a silent ferment had been constantly going on since 1846. When the revolution flared up the Posen Poles demanded from the Prussian government «a national reorganization», under which they understood a very wide autonomy of Polish districts under the supreme power of the Prussian king. The Prussian bourgeoisie understood quite well that the liberation of the Poles would strengthen the revolution in Germany because it would place free Poland between revolutionary Germany and reactionary Russia and would in this way deprive Nicholas the First of the possibility of giving assistance to the Prussian king in the suppression of the revolution. And in reality the tsar had already drawn the greater portion of his troops towards the German border and was only awaiting a slight pretext in order to throw in these troops for the suppression of the revolutionary forces in Germany. The liberation of Poland would have dealt a most powerful blow to the Prussian monarchy and to those forces upon which it was relying. Because at that time Germany could struggle against powerful Russia only by *carrying on a revolutionary war*, that is, by unleashing and developing all of their revolutionary forces, and first of all the power of the workers and peasants. But it was just these forces that the bourgeoisie feared and for this reason it was looking on silently while the king, having gathered his forces and provoked the revolt in Poland, had already in April suppressed it in a most ruthless manner. Fearing the revolutionary masses the bourgeoisie, therefore, permitted the smashing of that power which could facilitate the strengthening of the revolution.

The Prussian bourgeoisie conducted itself in an equally shameful, cowardly manner in another important question, in the question of Schleswig-Holstein. Both of these districts were populated by Germans, but under the power of Denmark. When the revolution flared up in Germany, an uprising against Danish domination began in Schleswig and Holstein. Both of these districts desired to join Germany. They appealed for assistance to the Frankfurt All-German National Assembly and to the Prussian king. The Prussian king agreed to give assistance to the «rebels» and sent his troops there under the command of General Wrangel. In doing this the king had in mind several aims. The striving of the Schleswig-Holsteiners were exceptionally popular throughout Germany. In sending his troops there, the Prussian king was attempting to enhance his popularity and to strengthen the position of the monarchy in Prussia and then, in the event of a successful outcome of a war against Denmark, he could count on annexing Schleswig-Holstein to Prussia which again would strengthen his own position.

The bourgeoisie understood quite well that in assisting Schleswig-Holstein, the king was pursuing the counter-revolutionary aim of strengthening the monarchy in Prussia and the suppression of the revolutionary peasant movement in these districts. Nevertheless it refused to utilize the movement in Schleswig-Holstein as a reserve for increasing the revolutionary forces in Prussia. It permitted the Prussian king to transform it from a reserve of the revolution into a reserve of counter-revolution.

In this way towards June 1848 the position in Prussia was also more favourable for a counter-revolution than for a revolution. The bourgeoisie, due to its fear of the people, betrayed the peasantry, initiated the offensive against the proletariat, betrayed the national-liberation movement in Poland and Schleswig-Holstein, renounced the revolution and openly entered upon the path of an agreement with the monarchy and landlords. «Without faith in itself, without faith in the people, mumbling against the higher-ups, trembling before the lower strata... mistrusting its own slogans... lacking energy... entering into a deal with their own desires... an old man condemned by all, who sees himself condemned to the fate of leading the youthful aspirations of a strong people and of repulsing them in the interests of his own old age; an old man who has lost hearing, sight, teeth, who has lost everything» — such was the Prussian bourgeoisie during the revolution as described by Marx.

#### **The Frankfurt All-German Assembly.**

The cowardly conduct of the German bourgeoisie was fully exposed in the All-German National Assembly in Frankfurt. Already in May 1848 during the first period of the revolution, representatives from all parts of Germany gathered in Frankfurt in order to draw up a plan for the unification of Germany. The government which at that time was still frightened by the revolutionary movement did not interfere with the election. The majority of the deputies of the Frankfurt All-German representatives consisted of representatives of the liberal bourgeoisie. Among them were many lawyers, professors and writers. This bourgeois intelligentsia glaringly exposed in the Frankfurt Assembly their entire cowardice and political impotence. «If the Frankfurt Assembly had been possessed of the least energy...», writes Engels — «it would have declared itself the only legal expression of the sovereign will of the German people, and thus have attached legal validity to every one of its decrees. It would, above all, have secured to itself an organized and armed force to put down any opposition on the part of the governments. And all this was easy, very easy, at that early period of the revolution. But that would have been expecting a great deal too much from an assembly composed in the majority of liberal attorneys and doctrinaire-professors».

«This assembly of old women was from the first day of its existence more frightened of the least popular movement».

Instead of acting it occupied itself with endless, fruitless debates regarding the nature of the constitution for the future united Germany and in reality everything remained as of old throughout Germany.

It is true that up to the final drawing up of the constitution the Frankfurt Assembly appointed at the end of July 1848 as «the guardian of the entire empire», one of the Austrian princes and formed under his direction the so-called «empire» ministry. However, this government had neither a real power, nor money. It hung in the air and was entirely powerless to carry into life any of its instructions.

#### **The June Days in Paris and the Strengthen- ing of Reac- tion in Austria.**

The June uprising of the Parisian proletariat struck terror into the hearts of the German bourgeoisie, and its defeat strengthened the forces of reaction in Germany and hastened its offensive. The big bourgeoisie now openly went over into the camp of the counter-revolution.

The reaction was victorious first of all in Austria. The victory of reaction in Paris strengthened the forces of the reactionary circles

in Vienna. Their policy in relation to the workers now assumed an openly provocative character.

In August 1848, the Minister issued an order reducing the wages of workers in public shops where 50,000 unemployed were working. This was the same challenge to the workers as that which was thrown at them on June 1848 in Paris by the order on the closing of national shops. It brought about a bloody encounter between the workers and the bourgeois national guard. The petty bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeois student youth stood aside from the struggle and calmly permitted the suppression of the workers' uprisings.

The public works were transferred from Vienna to other cities and the government hastened to clear Vienna of the unemployed.

With the defeat of the workers the Vienna «Committee of Public Safety» lost its real support and disbanded itself. The students committee also fell to pieces. Reaction was raising its head more and more.

The forces of reaction were particularly strengthened due to the victories of General Radetzky in Italy.

The Italian bourgeoisie was endeavouring to achieve national liberation not by the creation of a democratic united Italian republic «from below», but by means of the unification of Italy «from the top» around the largest of the Italian states—the Sardinian Kingdom. The Italian bourgeoisie, by refusing to enlist the revolutionary energy of the democratic masses, by failing to organize the workers and peasants of Italy for struggle, was powerless to cope with the Austrian troops which invaded Italy. The Italian troops were defeated by Radetzky in a number of battles. Milan capitulated and the old order was almost completely restored in Lombardy.

Kossuth and other leaders of the Hungarian bourgeoisie, in striving to secure in the bargain concessions from the Austrian government in the matter of the national liberation of Hungary, gave their consent to the participation of Hungarian soldiers in the suppression of the uprising in Italy. In this way the bourgeoisie of one country on account of its class limitations assisted the Hapsburg government in suppressing the liberation movement in other districts.

The Hapsburg government was artificially keeping up national hatred and, by inciting one nationality against the other, was strengthening its own position.

The Hungarians soon began to feel on their own back this policy of the Hapsburgs.

The government utilized Czechs, Croats, and other Slavonic nationalities against the Hungarian national movement.

Already in the summer of 1848 a Croatian vicar Jellachich was endowed with wide authority at the Austrian court and he demanded that the Hungarians should renounce the independence which was won by them in March. In August 1848 the Austrian government declared that Hungary must coordinate all of its decisions with the rest of the empire. The attempts of the Hungarian bourgeoisie to secure concessions by means of negotiations were absolutely fruitless.

The National Assembly of Hungary, in convening in the summer of 1848 annulled the privileges of the estates, formed a ministry independent of Austria, and fearing the peasant uprising, passed a law abolishing feudal duties. However, with this a considerable portion of peasant lands was given to the landlords, who in addition to that, had to receive from the peasants a financial compensation. The «liberated» Hungarian peasantry was left with only 10 million morgens of land while the landlords had 38 million morgens.

The peasants were dissatisfied and the revolt was growing. However, the National Assembly, where the landlords and the bourgeoisie were in the majority, remained deaf to the demands of the peasant masses. The Hungarian National government was successful in «quelling» the peasantry in the central districts by means of punitive expeditions and military-martial courts. But the peasant revolts assumed particularly sharp forms in the districts inhabited by national minorities. Here the Hungarian landlords oppressed peasants of Roumanian, Serbian, Slovak and other nationalities. The Austrian government was able to utilize in its own interests the national differences within Hungary itself and the inability of the bourgeoisie to solve the peasant and national questions. The Austrian government created the basis for reaction among the Slavonic people who hated the Hungarian landlords, and who were enraged by the decision on the buying off of feudal duties and who, even under the new government, were deprived of their basic national rights. The Austrian government set against the Hungarian national government on the one hand the backward Slavonic people and on the other hand — the reactionary Hungarian nobility. In September 1848 the army of the Croatian victor Jellachich, was sent to suppress the Hungarian uprising. It had to be reinforced by the entire garrison of Vienna.

**The October  
Uprising in  
Vienna.**

On the 6th of October an order was given to send the Vienna garrison for the suppression of the Hungarian revolution. However, not only the Hungarian workers, but also the petty bourgeoisie of Hungary understood that the permitting of the destruction of the Hungarian revolution would mean the preparation for victory of the reaction in Austria itself. The Vienna workers, artisans, students, petty bourgeoisie cut off the means of communication and did not permit the sending of troops to Hungary.

The workers flocked from everywhere armed with axes, picks, shovels, and iron sticks. They were joined by a section of the Academic Legion and detachments of armed city forces from the suburbs. Bloody encounters with government troops began to take place on the streets of Vienna, part of the troops went over to the side of the people. Barricades were built, cannons and gun shots thundered. After a vicious struggle the workers were successful in capturing cannons and directing them against the government troops.

The Austrian government fled from Vienna. The capital of Austria was in the hands of the rebels. Following on this, the government dispatched the army of the Czech General Windischgratz against rebelling Vienna. Vienna was besieged by government troops. During this siege it became clear to what extent the forces of revolution were being weakened by the severe persecution of the Viennese workers and how much the forces of the revolutionary defenders of Vienna were weakened by the previous departure of hundreds of thousands of workers of public shops from Vienna. Revolutionary Vienna could mobilize only 25 thousand fighters against the army of a hundred thousand of the emperor, which consisted mainly of Slavs.

Class contradictions were foiling in the camp of the Vienna defenders. The bourgeoisie did not trust the workers and feared them.



Workers could not entrust the bourgeoisie with the defence of the city and demanded arms.

«The Committee of Public Safety» which remained in the hands of the petty bourgeoisie issued conflicting decisions and was full of indecision and waverings. The plans of defence were not prepared for a long time. The detachments which came to Vienna from other cities were weak and numerically small.

The peasants also did not give active support to Vienna, after a special Imperial decree guaranteed them the abolishment of feudal duties, which they won in March 1848. Such was the position in Vienna.

In the meantime the army of General Jellachich sent by the Austrian government to Hungary suffered a defeat. The time came when the Hungarians could give assistance to the siege of Vienna. However they procrastinated and wavered. The Hungarian bourgeoisie viewed with fear the capital of Austria which formerly oppressed it, as well as the Vienna proletariat which seemed to it to be excessively revolutionary. The petty bourgeois «Committee of Public Safety» of Vienna, in turn also procrastinated in appealing for assistance to Hungarian troops. The delayed assistance of the Hungarians was weak and indecisive. As a result of this, on October 31st the army of the emperor invaded Vienna in spite of the heroic struggle, during which the Viennese workers demonstrated marvellous courage. The treachery of the big bourgeoisie was once again manifested on the night of October 31st when it instructed General Windischgratz, who was besieging Vienna, to occupy the city as soon as possible in order to defend it from «excesses of the mob.»

On occupying Vienna General Windischgratz declared martial law. Then began brutal persecution, military courts, and executions which continued until the spring of 1849. An absolute (unlimited) monarchy was restored in Austria.

#### **The Victory of Reaction in Prussia.**

The defeat of the October uprising in Vienna had the same significance for the revolution in Germany as the defeat of the Parisian proletariat in the June days had for the French revolution of 1848. The revolution in Germany suffered one defeat after another, going downward one step after another. The victory of reaction in Austria served as a signal for an open offensive of reaction in Prussia.

Already in June 1848 the Berlin workers rebelled, enraged by the arrogant renunciation by the bourgeoisie of the revolution and the policy of collaboration of the bourgeois government with the monarchy and landlords. The rebels attacked the arsenal on June 14th, taking up arms. In the words of Marx, this movement of the Berlin workers was «a revolution which stopped in the middle of the road». The workers did not go beyond this form of protest against the conduct of the bourgeois government of Camphausen. They lacked sufficient organization and class consciousness to overthrow this ministry and to take the leadership of the revolution into their own hands. But their offensive was sufficient to still further frighten the bourgeoisie and to still more strengthen the reaction.

The king, knowing that he would not meet any protest on the part of the frightened bourgeoisie, drove out the bourgeois ministry of *Camphausen* and replaced it

by the ministry of *Auerswald*, (June 14th), whose task it was to prepare the further offensive of reaction. It began with the arrest of leaders of the revolutionary proletariat. For instance, in Köln leaders of the workers union, *Gottschaeck* and *Anedke* were arrested. On June 17th it issued a reactionary law against the press. On June 18th a law was passed which virtually destroyed the national guard as an organized power of the revolution. On June 26th it struck a blow at the peasants, prohibiting the abolition of corvée without compensation. In August it annulled the jury trial system and finally on August 2th it betrayed Schleswig-Holstein by concluding armistice with Denmark under disgraceful conditions.

But even this government, headed by the liberal bureaucrat *Auerswald*, was soon found insufficiently energetic for the clique of the king's court and landlords. The suppression of the uprising in Vienna served as a signal for the final suppression of the revolution in Prussia. On November 2nd the king appointed a ministry of the extreme reaction of Brandenburg.

On November 9th the Prussian king passed a decree transferring the Prussian National Assembly to the city of Brandenburg where it was to renew its sessions only on November 27th.

However, the liberal bourgeoisie which understood quite well that all of its conquests were being destroyed limited itself to the tactic of «passive resistance» on account of its fear of the masses. The National Assembly permitted the disarming of the national guard and instead of open armed resistance it only called upon the people to «peacefully» refuse the payment of taxes although it knew quite well that it was, of course, impossible to expect that the separate tax payers would show a stubborn resistance to the forceful collection of taxes. The separate, scattered attempts were rapidly and energetically suppressed by the Prussian government. The Prussian Constituent Assembly itself was dispersed by troops. Already on November 10th an army of twenty thousand was concentrated in Berlin.

Martial law was declared in Berlin: meetings and gatherings were prohibited, clubs and unions disbanded. Reaction entrenched itself in Prussia, reigning supreme.

**The Disbanding of the Frankfurt National Assembly and the Struggle for the old German Constitution.**

The Frankfurt Assembly demonstrated during this period (from June to November) the same cowardice and foulness as was manifested by the bourgeoisie in Austria and Prussia. This gathering, after appointing Archduke Johan «the ruler of the empire» and creating an «imperial government» occupied itself in drawing up the «imperial» constitution. It did not pay attention to the fact that in the largest German states, Austria and Prussia, the counter-revolution was taking the offensive capturing one position after another. It did not want to see that it, itself, and the «imperial» government created by it, hung in the air.

With a care deserving better application it was occupying itself with the drawing up of the «imperial» constitution, intended for none knew whom.

In the heat of this «honorable» occupation and parliamentary blabbering they were confronted with a question of, not only German, but of all-European, significance. This was the question regarding the disgraceful armistice concluded by Prussia with Denmark in Malmoe on August 26th. This armistice, in addition, was concluded contrary to the protests of the plenipotentiary of the «imperial» government *Von Gager n*. The armistice provoked an explosion of indignation throughout Germany. Under such conditions, the Frankfurt National Assembly did not dare to approve the action of the Prussian government and on September 5th it stopped the armistice. The «Imperial» ministry resigned, but the bourgeois deputies were frightened by their own audacity and in the period intervening between the resignation of the

ministry and the formation of the new one, they confirmed, eleven days later on the 16th of September, the conditions of the armistice. In protest to this cowardly and foul conduct of the Constituent Assembly, which bowed to the Prussian king, the workers rebelled in Frankfurt on the 18th of September. They were actively supported by peasants of surrounding villages who came to the town to assist the workers engaged in battle. This uprising was suppressed by the forces of counter-revolutionary troops with the permission of the Frankfurt Assembly. The Constituent Assembly exposed before the entire world their union with the counter-revolution against the revolution. The bourgeois Frankfurt Assembly acted in the same disgraceful manner, during the decisive events in Austria.

When revolutionary Vienna, besieged by the emperor's troops, appealed for assistance to the Frankfurt National Assembly, it limited itself to a pitiful and fruitless mediation between revolutionary Vienna and Windischgratz. The proposal to support Vienna was rejected in Frankfurt; even the left section of the Assembly was daring enough to send a special delegation to Vienna, while the Frankfurt Assembly continued its fruitless talk.

The Frankfurt blabberers finally reached the detailed discussion of the constitution for an imaginary united Germany, only at the time when all of the uprisings, large and small, had already been suppressed by the reaction. Finally, after one year of idle talking, the constitution of the united Germany was drawn up in the spring of 1849. There remained only the question: Who will be the head of this future imaginary state?

The liberal bourgeoisie in the Frankfurt Assembly did not find anything better than to offer, in March 1849, the crown of the German empire to the Prussian king who was heading the reaction in Prussia. On the part of the German bourgeois this was a cowardly surrender to the mercy of the conqueror. The Prussian king responded with a contemptuous refusal to accept the crown without the agreement of the other German kings. According to his statement, he did not want «to pick the crown up from the mud».

Together with the government of Austria and of other German states, he refused to accept the All-German constitution drawn up by the Frankfurt National Assembly.

At that time the «imperial» government called a conference of German states in Frankfurt. The conference, which met on April 14th, 1849, was attended only by the representatives of the small German states. Most of them were in favour of the «imperial» constitution. Following this, on April 26th, the National Assembly declared the constitution in force. The counter-revolution, which was already victorious, answered this with a contemptuous laugh. Then the Frankfurt Assembly, finally gathering courage, addressed an appeal on May 4th, 1849, to the German people calling upon them to carry the constitution into life by force. The «imperial» government realizing after this its uselessness, resigned, and the Constituent Assembly simply ran away. The «imperial» constitution hung in the air as a scrap of paper useless to anyone. Only the workers and petty bourgeoisie of the southern German states attempted to give a last battle to the advancing reaction under the slogan of «defence of the imperial constitution».

**The Petty Bour-**  
**geoisie in**  
**Uprising.** The struggle for the imperial constitution marked the last stage of the German revolution. Uprisings began in Dresden, Pfalz, in Baden, and particularly on the Rhine. The May uprisings of 1849 exceeded even the March uprising of 1848 in their strength. The main forces

of the rebels consisted of city workers. They were usually joined by the village poor, agricultural workers, and petty peasants and city petty bourgeoisie. But the leadership of the movement was captured by the petty bourgeoisie. The wavering rôle of the petty bourgeoisie and its complete inability to lead the struggle was particularly demonstrated during the May uprisings. It hastened to capture power as soon as the uprising flared up (to a considerable extent against its own will) and utilized this power for the sole purpose of destroying the results of the uprising. «The petty bourgeois feared the people, they were afraid of the power which fell into their hands and above all they feared the horrible consequences» (Engels).

The first uprising flared up in Saxony. The union of workers organized in Dresden demanded from the government the adoption of the old German constitution. The king of Saxony sharply refused and began to concentrate troops on Dresden. This served as a signal for an uprising. On May 3-4th street fights began in Dresden. The workers of Dresden and of the neighbouring industrial districts gained a victory over the government troops. The king fled. A temporary government was formed in Dresden. The defence of the city was under the leadership of the Russian emigrant, *Michael Bakunin*. But the people of Dresden, after gaining a victory, instead of defeating the enemy by a decisive offensive, concluded an armistice with the government troops. This armistice, which gave the troops the possibility of receiving reinforcements, had fatal consequences for the people of Dresden. The Prussian troops, which came to Dresden during the time of armistice, suppressed the uprising. The leaders of the rebellion were condemned to death, the sentences being later changed to life imprisonment. Bakunin was turned over to the Russian government which imprisoned him in the Schlüsselburg fortress.

Uprisings also took place in a number of cities of the districts around the Rhine, in Düsseldorf, and in Elberfeld where Engels took an active part in the uprising. When Engels arrived at Elberfeld on May 11th he found there an armed detachment of three thousand which consisted mainly of workers. The bourgeois national guard took a neutral position. The people of Elberfeld had little contact with the surrounding cities only with Solingen where the workers organized a detachment of five hundred people. Under such circumstances it was necessary to demonstrate revolutionary energy and determination. It was necessary to disarm the bourgeois national guard, to levy a compulsory tax on the bourgeoisie, to arm all workers and to secure support from the neighbouring peasantry through a number of measures relieving its position. Nothing of this kind was done. The Committee of Public Safety which was leading the movement was in the hands of the petty bourgeoisie. It procrastinated and wavered not daring to resort to terrorist measures against the enemies of the revolution. «It is known» — writes Engels, — «how the uprising ended. It is known how workers, tired of constant delays, indecisiveness, half-heartedness, and treacherous delays of the petty bourgeoisie, finally retreated from Elberfeld in order to secure some kind of assistance. It is known how they were hounded by the lancers and peasantry which was incited against them. It is known that immediately after their retreat, the big bourgeoisie again crawled out, ordered the removal of the barricades and built a triumphal arch in honour of the approaching Prussian «heroes». The uprising in the cities of the districts around the Rhine was suppressed.

The German revolution ended in defeat.

In Pfaltz and Baden the uprising spread through the country. Soldiers, arms, war materials and money were in the hands of the revolutionaries. Even the soldiers of the regular army were waiting an opportune moment to go over to the camp of the revolution. And despite that, the petty bourgeoisie having captured the leadership of the movement, brought it to ruin. The unusual heroism and enthusiasm of the participants could not correct the lamentable mistakes of the war commanders. For a period of two months, the army of revolutionaries consisting of 20,000 men was struggling against the government army of 100,000. In one bloody battle after another (under Vagshertel and Pashtadt) they were trying to defeat the oncoming army. Only towards the middle of July 1849, was the uprising crushed. The German revolution ended in failure.

**Suppression of  
the Revolution  
in Hungary.**

Now came the turn of Hungary. In the spring of 1849 the Hungarian troops gained a victory over the Austrian army. The Hungarian parliament proclaimed Hungary an independent state, deprived the Austrian emperor of the Hungarian throne and elected a temporary revolutionary government with Kossuth at the head. Then the Austrian government appealed for assistance to tsarist Russia. Nicholas the First, for a long time had been preparing for an intervention (armed interference) into the Hungarian affairs. As the European gendarme, Nicholas, «the Club-wielder», decided to come «to the defence of order» and «to strangle the hydra of revolution which threatened to set aflame also the very house of the Russian tsar and, first of all, the Polish possessions of tsarist Russia.»

In addition, the creation of a strong united Germany was against the interests of Russian tsarism. It was just for the purpose of counterbalancing the growing strength of Prussia, that it was necessary to lend support to its old enemy — Austria. The Russian landlords and merchants were not prone in the scramble to capture also a part of the Austrian territory as a base for the long cherished plan of Russia's advance to the Mediterranean and the capture of Constantinople and the Straits.

Over 150,000 Russian troops were thrown through Galicia and Walachia for the suppression of the Hungarian uprising.

This gave the Russian-Austrian forces a great numerical advantage over the Hungarians. In August 1849 the Hungarian army was defeated. Kossuth fled to Turkey. The Hungarian uprising was suppressed with unusual brutality. Military courts, scaffolds, shootings piled mountains of corpses in Hungary.

**The Reason for  
the Defeat of  
the Revolution  
in Germany.**

The bourgeois revolution in Germany suffered a defeat. It was not completed. What causes brought about its defeat?

The basic reason lay in the fact that the German bourgeoisie was no longer able, and the proletariat of Germany still did not have the power to lead the general democratic revolutionary offensive against absolutism and against the semi-feudal classes. The German bourgeoisie, when compared with the English bourgeoisie of the 17th century and the French of the 18th century, was too late in carrying out its bourgeois revolution. Beginning the revolution in the 19th century it already had behind itself the proletariat which was antagonistic to it, and all the layers of the city population whose interests and ideas were related to the proletariat. For this reason the German bourgeoisie «sank to the level of some kind of an estate which was opposed both to the crown and to the people... from the very beginning it was inclined to betray the people and come to an agreement with the crowned representatives of the old society» (Marx). It betrayed the peasantry, it held down with its entire might the proletariat, which had not as yet grown strong, leading it alongside with it, it shackled the forces of the petty artisans, petty journeymen in the cities, in a word it was afraid of the people, it feared its decisive attack against its enemy.

Under such conditions the revolution could be victorious only in the event that the proletariat of Germany would assume the hegemony (leadership) in the revolutionary struggle in order to direct the general democratic offensive against feudalism and absolutism, to carry to the end the bourgeois-democratic revolution in Germany and immediately after that, depending upon its forces, the forces of the conscious and organized proletariat, to begin the transition towards a socialist revolution.

*But the German proletariat was not as yet ready to assume the hegemony. It was still weak and unorganized. It did not have a party of its own armed with revolutionary theory and tempered in the experience of the class struggle.*

The revolutionary movement in Germany in 1848 lacked unity and common action, lacked aggressiveness and a definite general aim. Its separate currents were isolated from each other and were weakening rather than strengthening each other. The peasant movement was detached from the movement in the city, the movement of the city workers and petty bourgeoisie frequently did not fuse, did not converge into one powerful current which could also engulf the village in its course.

Further, *the absence of a general national centre* also had a negative effect on the course of the revolution. For example, the Prussian revolution was not a national revolution, but according to Marx, «a provincial-Prussian.» «The Vienna, Cassel, München and all other kinds of provincial uprisings were going on alongside with it and challenged its supremacy.» The political dismemberment of Germany brought with it the dismemberment of the movement and thereby weakened it.

And then the *international* situation also exerted an unfavourable influence on the course and outcome of the German revolution. The proximity of the contemporary European gendarme — the autocratic Russia — the country of serfdom, the antagonistic attitude of England, which was expressed in the assistance given by it to Denmark, the union of these two reactionary forces, directed against the revolution in Europe were binding the movement, interfering with its full development.

And finally, the defeat of the revolution is also explained by *the absolute inability of the bourgeoisie to solve the national question.* This circumstance enabled the reaction to utilize the national movement for their purposes and to incite one nationality against the other.

The autocratic oppressing policy of the German bourgeoisie in relation to the Slavonic people who inhabited the territory within the possession of the German states — Czechs, Croatian, Ruthenian, etc., threw them into the camp of counter-revolution. On coming into power after the March days, the liberal bourgeoisie did not proclaim the freedom for all the people inhabiting Germany. We have already seen how in actual practice it helped the Prussian king suppress the Poles. It did not show a better attitude also in relation to other people. For this reason the Pan-Slavonic propaganda enjoyed great success in the ranks of the Czechs, Croatian and other — the propaganda for unification of all Slavonic people under the he-

gemony of Russia which at that time was a bulwark of world reaction and counter-revolution. On the other hand, as we have seen, the reaction in Austria, in utilizing the hatred of the Slavs toward their German oppressors, was used by them for the suppression of the revolutionary movement among the Germans in order that they might in turn, smash with German forces every attempt on the part of the Slavs to gain their independence. Thus the oppressing and autocratic policy of the German bourgeoisie, deprived the German revolution of one of its reserves, because it *flung Slavs into the camp of counter-revolution*. This circumstance also facilitated the defeat of the German revolution.

Only the proletariat and its party, the party of revolutionary communism is capable of solving the national question in actual practice by recognizing the right of the oppressed people for full separation and for an independent state existence. «Leninism proved, and the imperialist war and the revolution in Russia, confirmed, that the national question can be solved only in connection with and on the basis of the proletarian revolution» (*Stalin*).

### **§ 23. The Working Class and the Tactics of Marx and Engels in the Revolution of 1848 in Germany.**

When the March revolution broke out, Marx and Engels returned to Germany. They went to the Rhine province, — the most advanced industrial district which therefore had larger proletarian cadres than the rest of Germany.

As we have already stated there was no independent workers' party in Germany of that time. The Communist League organized by Marx and Engels had only a few sections in Germany and a few separate individuals scattered in various localities.

But in the person of Marx, they had a first class leader and in the «Communist Manifesto» were expounded the basic programme and tactics of communists in the bourgeois revolution.

«In Germany the the Communist Party, fights together with the bourgeoisie whenever it acts in a revolutionary way, against the absolute monarchy, the feudal squirearchy, and the petty bourgeoisie.

«*But they never cease for a single instant, to instil into the working class the clearest possible recognition of the hostile antagonism between bourgeoisie and proletariat, in order that the German workers may straightway use as so many weapons against the bourgeoisie, the social and political conditions that the bourgeoisie must necessarily introduce along with its supremacy, and in order that, after the fall of the reactionary classes in Germany, the fight against the bourgeoisie itself may immediately begin*» («The Communist Manifesto»).

This tactic was also carried out by Marx and Engels in the German revolution of 1848.

«Never before had any tactical programme justified itself to such an extent as this», wrote Engels many years hence. «Drawn up on the eve of the revolution, it stood the test of this revolution and thereafter whenever any workers party deviated from it it paid the penalty.



During the course of the entire German revolution Marx and Engels fought determinedly and consistently for the radical solution of all these tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, for leading it to its final aim in order that «after the fall of the reactionary class in Germany the fight against the bourgeoisie itself may immediately begin, the struggle for the growing over of the bourgeois-democratic into a socialist, proletarian revolution.»

In doing so Marx and Engels considered the main question the creation of an independent class proletarian party, independent from other parties.

As the organized centre around which the future cadres of the party were to rally was the general political newspaper which Marx and Engels began to publish.

But the contemporary proletariat of Germany «which was so little developed, accustomed to full spiritual subordination, unorganized and still incapable even of an independent organization, felt only dimly the deep contradiction between its interests and the interests of the bourgeoisie. «Several hundred scattered members of the Communist League were unnoticed in the great mass which was suddenly set into motion. And that is why the German proletariat appeared on the political arena at first as an extreme democratic party» (Engels).

It required a whole year of revolution, a whole year of untiring work of Marx and Engels in the training of the revolutionary proletarian cadres, in order that these cadres could solve the task of creating an independent proletarian party, «to such an extent was the entire atmosphere in Germany bourgeois and petty bourgeois» (Lenin).

#### **Stephan Born and „the Brotherhood of Workers“**

The low level of the contemporary German labour movement and its weakness was clearly demonstrated in the «Brotherhood of Workers» which was organized in Berlin by Stephan Born and other members of the «Communist League.» In his work Born followed the tactic of dragging at the tail-end of the bourgeoisie; he did not raise the class consciousness of the workers, but on the con-

trary, adapted himself to the undeveloped views of the contemporary working class and in reality was helping the bourgeoisie to drag the workers along with it.

Born concentrated his entire attention on the narrow economic interests of workers. Born was greatly influenced by the ideas of Louis Blanc on the organization of workers' artels. Born was engaged in the organization of strikes, — trade-unions, producers' cooperatives, forgetting that «the task consisted first of all in winning by means of a political struggle such ground for themselves on which alone these things could be realized firmly and securely» (Engels).

When the central committee of the «Brotherhood» with Born at the head called a conference of artisans and workers' unions in Berlin, then at this conference, among other economic demands, was adopted a resolution on the restoration of the title of guild masters. This dream of restoring the guilds pictures clearly not only the low level of the movement, but also the inability of Born to raise the class consciousness of the proletariat. The narrow economy leading to the subordination of the proletariat to the bourgeoisie remained the characteristic feature of his work. That is the reason why Marx and Engels decisively condemned Born's tactics of adapting itself and dragging at the tail-end of the bourgeoisie. In opposition to it they put forward their revolutionary programme and tactics.

#### **The «Neue Rheinische Zeitung».**

On account of the backwardness of the German labour movement the «Neue Rheinische Zeitung» which was published by Marx and Engels, could not appear at once as an open Communist organ.

The «Neue Rheinische Zeitung» appeared as an organ of the revolutionary democracy, but that democracy which «everywhere and on all concrete occasions put forward its specific proletarian character which it still could not once and for all attribute to its banner» (Engels). Marx and Engels coped splendidly with their tasks.

The «Neue Rheinische Zeitung» castigated the German liberal bourgeoisie, exposed the cowardice, the wavering of the petty-bourgeois democracy, subjected it to merciless criticism and in this way freed the workers from petty-bourgeois influence. In a flaming article regarding the June days in Paris Marx emphasized their significance as the first great battle for the preservation or destruction of the bourgeois order. Through their work in the «Neue Rheinische Zeitung» Marx and Engels were consolidating and organizing the workers, raising their class consciousness and in this way preparing cadres for the future workers' Party. The «Neue Rheinische Zeitung» stood consistently for the revolutionary solution of all the tasks of the bourgeois revolution in Germany as the preparation of the ground for the growing over of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into the proletarian revolution.

The creation of a united general German democratic republic with universal suffrage, the general arming of the people, the cancellation of all feudal duties without compensation, the confiscation of land from the landlords, the nationalization of the banks, of transport, the separation of church from the State — such was the programme which Marx and Engels put forward as a radical solution to the tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution.

«The interests of the proletariat imperatively demanded the unification of Germany into a single nation and the clearing out, in this way of all kind of historic rubbish from that arena on which the proletariat and the bourgeoisie had to test their forces» (Engels). Such a unification was possible only by means of a revolution «from below» and its unavoidable condition was the revolutionary war against tsarist Russia which played the rôle of a gendarme, «the strangler» of every revolutionary movement both in Russia itself as well as in Europe.

This war had to unleash and sharpen the class contradictions in Germany and to raise the revolutionary movement to a new stage. Marx and Engels saw in the revolutionary war against tsarism a key towards the growing over of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a proletarian revolution. The suppression of the revolution in Hungary by the Russian tsar Nicholas the First, which came subsequently in 1849, glaringly confirmed the Marxian estimation of the contemporary tsarist Russia as the international gendarme and confirmed the correctness of the tactics, indicated by him.

The Cologne  
Workers' Union  
and «The De-  
mocratic  
Society».

Alongside with the creation of the «Neue Rheinische Zeitung» Marx and Engels took an energetic and direct part in the labour movement. On the arrival of Marx and Engels in Cologne in the spring of 1848, one of the members of the Communist League Dr. Gotschalk, had already founded there a Cologne Workers' Union. There were about 7,000 members of this Union. However, Gotschalk

had a very incorrect position on the basic question of the revolution. Gotschalk was under the strong influence of Weitling, and did not understand the tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution; he wanted such a development of the revolutionary movement which would omit the consecutive stages from feudal Germany and to jump directly into a «workers' republic.» Gotschalk followed a policy antagonistic to Marx.

In fighting against Stephan Born, who minimized the tasks of the proletariat in the bourgeois revolution, Marx and Engels struggled simultaneously also against Gotschalk and those who did not see the bourgeois character of the German revolution of 1848. This was a determined struggle on two fronts.

Shortly afterwards, Marx and Engels won over the majority of the Cologne Workers' Union on their side. As chairman of the Union one of the adherents of Marx, was elected first and later Marx himself.

Not limiting themselves to the work in the Workers' Union, Marx and Engels also worked in the «Democratic Society» in which the Cologne Workers' Union had their deputies. While working in the ranks of democracy, Marx and Engels came out at the same time against the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois democrats everywhere, whenever they attempted to obscure their class antagonism to the proletariat.

«In Germany 1848—1849 Marx supported the extreme revolutionary democracy. Subsequently he never retracted what was stated by him at that time about the tactic» (*Lenin*). Here, Marx was carrying out the same tactic of preparing the consolidation of proletarian forces into an independent class organization, a tactic of carrying to the end the demand of democracy by means of exposing before the masses the mistakes and weaknesses of the democrats. «While entering this bourgeois-democratic union and pushing forward the revolutionary bourgeoisie, Marx and his adherents were subjecting to a thorough-going criticism the half-heartedness of their allies from the right» (*Stalin*).

In the Spring of 1849 the revolution entered a new stage of its development. The proletariat, peasantry and petty-bourgeoisie during the May uprising began an armed struggle against the landlords and against the big bourgeoisie which concluded an alliance with them. As it was already stated, the petty-bourgeoisie captured the leadership of this uprising. By this very fact the question of the creation of an independent proletarian party, which was prepared by Marx and Engels after almost a full year of work in the «Neue Rheinische Zeitung», in the Cologne Workers' Union and in the «Democratic Society», stood out especially sharply, because once the petty-bourgeoisie was already approaching power then the proletariat had to hasten the creation of an independent party. In April 1849 Marx and other members of the Communist League announced their intention of leaving the «Democratic Society». Simultaneously the Cologne Workers' Union also left it in order to become an independent workers' party as it had already become an inception of such a party as a result of the uninterrupted work of Marx and Engels.

During the May uprisings of 1849 the «Neue Rheinische Zeitung» untiringly called upon the proletariat, peasantry and the petty-bourgeoisie for a decisive revolutionary struggle against reaction. Engels took a direct part in the uprising. But the struggle was too unequal. The victory remained on the side of reaction. The uprisings in Dresden, Baden and Elberfeld were suppressed, the Rhine province was flooded with soldiers, the «Neue Rheinische Zeitung» was closed, Marx was deported.

On May 19th the last number of the «Neue Rheinische Zeitung» came out. «We had to give up our forces», writes Engels «but we left it carrying away our entire military armament, under the sound of drums, with the waving of the red banner of the last number in which we warned the Cologne workers of the hopeless putches and told them «the editors of the 'Neue Rheinische Zeitung' in parting with you thank you for the joint work with them. Their last words everywhere and at all times will be: *the liberation of the working class!*»

The Appeal of  
the Central  
Committee of  
the Communist  
League.  
(March 1850).

In July 1849 following the defeat of the revolution in Germany and France, the members of the Central Committee of the Communist League again gathered in London. Here they began to work with renewed energy. In a famous appeal of the Central Committee to the Communist League, issued in March 1850, Marx expounds that which was a guiding line for the «Neue Rheinische Zeitung», the basis of the tactics of the proletariat in the bourgeois-democratic revolution and his teaching on the growing over of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist proletarian revolution. The appeal called for the organization and the strengthening of an independent proletarian party.

The attitude of this revolutionary workers' party towards the petty-bourgeois democracy was as follows: the workers' party will go along with the petty-bourgeois democracy when it comes out against those classes towards the overthrow of which the proletariat is striving. The workers' party will come out against the petty-bourgeois democracy in all those cases when it wants to strengthen itself.

But even at the time when the petty-bourgeois democrats are fighting against feudalism and absolutism, *the proletariat must have its own independent party* if it does not wish to drag at the tail-end of the bourgeois democrats and become simply a tool in their hands.

«To march separately, to strike together», thus Lenin later described the tactics of the proletariat in relation to the petty bourgeoisie when it is still carrying on a struggle against the remnants of feudalism and against autocracy.

At the following stage of the revolution, in the immediate revolutionary struggle, which gives the upper hand to the petty-bourgeois democrats, the struggle of the proletariat does not by any means cease. The proletariat continues the struggle fighting for the carrying to the end of the bourgeois-democratic revolution and for its growing over into the proletarian Socialist revolution.

«While the petty bourgeois democrats, after obtaining the largest possible number of the demands enumerated above, wish to end the

revolution as quickly as possible, our interests require and our task is to make that revolution an uninterrupted one, until all the more or less possessing classes have been removed from their position of dominance, until the proletariat has conquered state power, until the association of proletarians not only in one country but in all the dominant countries of the world, will be sufficiently advanced to put an end to the competition among the proletarians of all these countries, and until at least the decisive forces of production are concentrated in the hands of the proletariat. For us it is not a matter of merely changing private property but of its destruction, not of obscuring the class contradictions but of the destruction of classes, not of the improvement of the existing society but of the establishment of a new society», states the Appeal.

In the struggle for the further development of the revolution, the Communists must «immediately establish their own revolutionary workers' government» parallel to a newly established official government. «So that the bourgeois-democratic government will not only immediately lose the support of the workers, but shall from the very beginning find themselves under the surveillance and threat of that power which is supported by the entire mass of workers». The arming of the entire proletariat must be carried out at the same time. The Communists must thoroughly expose the petty bourgeois democracy, must raise to the extreme limits the proposals of the democrats, transforming these demands into direct attacks against private property, and in this way encroach further and further into the existing order, destroying its normal course.

In this way the Communists will prepare the pre-requisites for the growing over of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into the socialist, proletarian revolution, because only the latter can be considered by the revolutionary Communists as a real victory. «Their militant slogan must be the uninterrupted (permanent) revolution.»

«For us February and March can have the significance of a real revolution only if these months had not been the termination but, on the contrary, the starting point of a prolonged revolutionary movement, in which... the proletariat would have developed further by their own struggles... and in which the proletariat would gradually have won one position after another in a series of battles», writes Engels.

«Marx did not at all propose to *begin* the revolution in the Germany of the fifties with the direct establishment of a proletarian state power but as the *crowning event* of the revolution, after hurling step by step one section of the bourgeoisie after another from its height of power in order to ignite the torch of revolution in every country after the proletariat came to power...» (*Stalin*).

The Marxian idea of the uninterrupted (permanent) revolution was ingeniously developed and carried out in practice by Lenin and the Bolsheviks in the Russian revolution.

«Lenin was the only Marxist who correctly understood and developed the idea of permanent revolution... The idea of the bourgeois-democratic revolution growing into the Socialist revolution advanced by Lenin as long ago as 1905, is one of the forms of the embodiment of the Marxist theory of permanent revolution» (*Stalin*).

**The Counter-  
Revolutionary  
Trotskyite The-  
ory of Perma-  
nent Revolution.**

At the same time the Mensheviks assert that, «between the bourgeois-democratic revolution on the one hand, and the proletarian on the other there is a chasm, or at any rate a Chinese wall separating one from the other by a period of time more or less protracted, in the course of which the bourgeoisie, having come into power, develops capitalism while the proletariat accumulates forces and prepares for the decisive struggle against capitalism. This interval usually extends over many decades, if not longer. «That this Chinese Wall «theory» is totally devoid of scientific meaning under imperialism hardly needs to be proved: it is and can be only a means of concealing and camouflaging the counter-revolutionary aspirations of the bourgeoisie» (Stalin).

The theory of permanent revolution put forward by Trotsky is one of the varieties of Menshevism which radically distorts the teaching of Marx. Trotsky does not in any way raise the question about the growing over of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into the proletarian revolution. Trotsky jumps over the bourgeois-democratic stage of the revolution. «Contrary to Marx and Lenin who proposed the establishment of a proletarian power as the *crowning event* of the revolution, Trotsky and his adherents wanted to *begin* at once by the establishment of the power of the proletariat, failing to understand that by so doing they were closing their eyes to such a «trifle» as the existence of survivals of serfdom, they overlooked in their calculation so important a force as the Russian peasantry...» (Stalin).

The distortion of the Marxian theory by Trotsky and his adherents consisted «not only in the underestimation of the rôle of the peasantry but also in the underestimation of the forces and abilities of the proletariat to lead the peasantry with it, and lack of faith in the idea of the hegemony of the proletariat» (Stalin).

«The permanent revolution» of Trotsky is not a simple underestimation of the revolutionary possibilities of the peasant movement.

«The permanent revolution» is such an underestimation of the peasant movement which leads to the *negation* of Lenin's theories on the dictatorship of the proletariat» (Stalin).

Already in the revolution of 1905 Trotsky in putting forward the slogan «Without the tsar and a workers' government», considered at the same time that the position of this workers' government is hopeless if it is not aided by the simultaneous proletarian revolution in the most important capitalist countries.

In denying the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country, Trotsky by this very fact condemns the working class to inactivity, to simply awaiting a simultaneous revolution in the most important countries. In actual practice this theory of Trotsky serves as a weapon for the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie in the struggle against the U.S.S.R.

«Who gave the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie its spiritual weapon against Bolshevism in the form of the thesis of the impossibility of building socialism in our country, in the form of the thesis of the inevitability of the degeneration of the Bolsheviks, etc? Trotsky gave it this weapon. It is not an accident that all anti-Soviet groupings in the U. S. S. R. in their attempts to give grounds for their argument

for the inevitability of the struggle against the Soviet government referred to the well-known thesis of Trotskyism of the impossibility of building socialism in one country, of the inevitable degeneration of the Soviet power, of the probable return to capitalism» (*Stalin*).

In smashing Trotskyism which became the advance guard of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie, the proletariat of our country under the leadership of the C. P. S. U. (The Communist Party of the Soviet Union) and its Central Committee, with Comrade Stalin at its head, is overcoming victoriously all difficulties and is building the Socialist society. In this struggle the proletariat is guided by the Marxian-Leninist theory.

**The Lessons of 1848.** The proletariat gained great lessons from the revolution of 1848. This revolution exposed with particular force and in a glaring manner not only the incapability of the bourgeoisie to solve the national question, to lead to the end the bourgeois-democratic revolution, but it also exposed *the counter-revolutionary rôle of the bourgeoisie during the revolution*. Frightened by the appearance of the proletariat as an independent political force, as the growing grave-digger of the bourgeoisie, it leaps into the embraces of reaction, endeavours to make a deal with the forces of the old order. The revolution of 1848 exposed the extent of wavering and the *instability of the city petty bourgeoisie and peasantry*. It is just this revolution that forcefully brought to the forefront the question of the hegemony (the leading rôle) of the proletariat in the bourgeois-democratic and Socialist revolution, the question of its allies — the toiling strata of the non-proletarian classes.

«The question of the toiling masses of the petty bourgeoisie, of the city and the village, the question of winning over these masses to the side of the proletariat, is a most important question of the proletarian revolution. Whom will the toiling people of the city and the village support in the struggle for power, the bourgeoisie or the proletariat. Whose reserves will they be, the reserves of the bourgeoisie or the reserves of the proletariat. Upon this depends the fate of the revolution and the stability of the proletarian dictatorship. The revolution of '48 and '71 in France perished mainly due to the fact that the peasant reserves were on the side of the bourgeoisie. The October Revolution was victorious because it was able to take away from the bourgeoisie its peasant reserves, it was able to win these reserves to the side of the proletariat, and the proletariat became in this revolution the only leading force of the millions of the toiling masses of people of the city and the village» (*Stalin*).

And finally, it is just on the lessons of 1848 that *the Marxian-Leninist teaching of the uninterrupted revolution is based*, regarding the growing over of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into the proletarian, socialist revolution. The Bolshevik Party, with comrade Lenin at the head, ingenuously utilized the experiences of the 1848 revolution and the revolutionary heritage of Marx and Engels. It developed it in application to the new conditions of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat in the bourgeois-democratic revolution, which takes place in the epoch of imperialism, in the country with the most concentrated proletariat, which had already created its militant,



consistent revolutionary party, armed with revolutionary theory and forged together by iron discipline.

*The growing over of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a proletarian revolution in the period from February to October 1917, the victorious socialist construction of our day — is the result of the only correct, the consistently-revolutionary tactics of the Bolsheviks in the Russian revolution in 1905—1917, who were basing themselves on the experience of Marx and Engels.*

## CHAPTER VI

# THE STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE AND THE CIVIL WAR IN NORTH AMERICA.

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### § 24. The War for Independence.

#### The Colonization of North America.

America was discovered in 1492 by the Spaniards. The colonization of North America by the Spaniards began during that period, mainly within the territory of Central America. In the 16th century the Spaniards already occupied vast districts also in the southern parts of the North American Continent — New Mexico, Florida, Texas and California.

In the beginning of the 17th century three other countries — France, Holland and England — took part in the colonization of the American Continent. France occupied great sparsely populated districts in the heart of the country, beyond the Alleghany Mountains along the course of the Mississippi and St. Lawrence Rivers, including also the entire district of what is to day Canada. In the beginning of the 17th century Holland founded on the territory of what is to day the state of New York, a colony called «New Netherlands.»

And finally, beginning with 1609, the settlement of America by the English began and proceeded at a rapid pace; English colonial possessions in America soon surpassed the American colonies of all other countries, not only in regard to the size of the population, but also as far as their economic development was concerned.

In 1664 the English drove the Dutch out of America. In 1763, following the war with France, England captured all of the American colonies of France with the sole exception of the state of Louisiana (which was subsequently, in 1803, purchased by the U.S.A.). In the same year England began an offensive on Spanish possessions and took Florida away from Spain.

The victory of England over its rivals in America is due to the rapid development of industry in England, as is also its victory over Spain, Holland and France in the struggle for world commercial and industrial domination.

#### The Varied Character of the American Colonies.

The French colonies were predominantly military-commercial settlements (trading stations). The main occupation of the French colonists was trade with Indians from whom the Frenchmen obtained precious furs and other goods in exchange for worthless trinkets. In the Spanish and Dutch colonies trade with the Indians was also carried on. Alongside with this the production of tobacco and sugar cane on colossal plantations with the use of the Indian slave labour, and subsequently also of the Negro, began to develop rapidly in the Spanish colonies as well as in the Southern parts of the French colonies in the middle of the 17th century.

At first the southern English and Dutch colonies differed very little from the Spanish.

**The Conflict of Class Interests in the Colonization of America by England.**

In connection with the development of the woollen industry in England the transference to intensive economy in the 17th — 18th centuries, which was accompanied by the driving of the peasants from the land in England resulting in masses of the peasantry being left landless, brought with it the peasant emigration from England to the American colonies.

The class interests of the English nobility and English peasantry came into collision in the colonization of America. The peasantry, driven off the land, hoped to receive land by going to the «new world». In the meantime the upper strata of the nobility, the higher lords, as well as the rich merchants had already succeeded in receiving the title to these lands from the English king and grabbed colossal agricultural possessions in the American colonies.

In the South, where it was profitable to grow tobacco and rice with slave labour the English peasant-settler and small farmer came into conflict with large plantation and slave-owners.

In the North where slave labour was not profitable the colonists had to rent the land which the English noblemen had already succeeded in grabbing by getting titles to it from the king of England.

*In this way both in the North and the South the petty peasantry was coming into conflict with the large landowners, who grabbed up the land.*

**The Extermination of the Indians.**

The landed aristocracy in capturing the lands in North America came into collision also with the native population — the Indian tribes. The Spaniards in the South, on finding slavery among the natives, forced five million Indians into slavery and compelled them to work on the great estates and in the silver mines.

The English nobility also tried to enslave the Indian tribes of North America, but in the North the Indian tribes were still in the tribal stage and stubbornly resisted all attempts to enslave them. They retreated into the woods and prairies of the immense unpopulated West. On learning that the whites had captured Indians and compelled them to work on their plantations, the Indian tribes would attack such a plantation attempting to free their enslaved tribesmen.

The English colonists as well as the colonists of other countries advanced into the heart of the country, driving the Indians from their lands and at the same time annihilating entire Indian tribes.

Up to the last quarter of the 18th century, the Indian tribes displayed strong resistance against the attempt to colonize the territory west of the Alleghany Mountains. To the north of this boundary the Iroquois Indians were successfully fighting the whites; the territory south of the Alleghany Mountains, was defended by this warlike tribe. More accessible to colonization proved to be the territory reached through the mountain path in the centre of the Alleghany Mountains, which led to the plain of the Ohio River. Towards the end of 1883 via this road, through the state of Pennsylvania 50,000 colonists migrated west.

**White Slavery.** The landed aristocracy of the American colonies attempted to transform into slaves or servants those peasants who migrated to America. The voyage from Europe to America was very expensive and many a settler had no money to pay for it. Special agents of the shipping companies in Europe enrolled those who desired to go to America and proposed to them that they sign an agreement by which they were obliged, in compensation for the trip, to serve as slaves for 4 to 5 years. When the «contracted» immigrants were brought to the American port they were sold into slavery on the

auction block. Those of the American colonists who were entangled into debts by usurers also fell into slavery.

Along with the sale of immigrants into slavery people who were condemned in England for various crimes were sentenced to hard labour in the American colonies, and also fell into slavery. Prior to the 18th century 50,000 such white slaves were deported from England to America. While the immigrants sold at auction and debtors ordinarily had to serve from four to five years persons condemned for crime had to serve from 7 to 14 years. Also in many cases, even at the expiration of this term, white slaves would not receive their freedom. The planters took advantage of the difficult situation of the slaves and would conclude enslaving agreements with them also for future years.

#### **The Attempts at Enslaving the Peasants.**

The large landowners in the Northern and Central colonies (Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, Connecticut and also in New Netherland, etc.) permitted the peasants to settle on their lands only under the condition that they would carry out certain duties. During the first two years the peasants were freed from payments and duties but later on they had to pay taxes, to serve *corvée* and to pay rent for the land. In this way the peasantry became dependent upon the landlords from whom they received their land.

In the Northern colonies white slavery and serfdom were not widespread due to a number of reasons. Here the land was rocky, not fertile, demanding thorough cultivation. Forced slave-labour for this reason was not profitable. In addition, the population was scattered, there was much free land, and if the landowners attempted to apply severe measures of compulsion, the enslaved peasant could run away to the West where there was free land. Furthermore, in the North was developing industry, navigation, artisan trades, and the labour of free workers was squeezing out the slave labour which was less productive.

#### **White Slavery in the South.**

A different situation prevailed in the South. In the Southern colonies there was a warm climate and fertile unexhausted, virgin soil. Even with the less productive slave labour and poor cultivation of the soil rich harvests of tobacco and rice were possible. In the beginning of the 17th century the large Southern landowners gave individual plots of land to the colonists and demanded that they serve *corvée* and pay quit-rent, but beginning with the middle of the century it was everywhere found more profitable to transfer to large production with the application of slave-labour. Up to the middle of the 17th century the Southern plantations employed mostly temporary white slaves from among the «contracted servants.» There were no reserves of unoccupied lands in the South inasmuch as the entire land was seized by the planters and to the South and the West, until 1763, lay not «free» lands but the slaveowning colonies of the Spaniards and French.

#### **The Black Slaves.**

With the middle of the 17th century white slaves began to be replaced rapidly by black slaves — Negroes. The reasons for this were as follows: the white slaves were temporary slaves and within 4—7 years they became free while a Negro remained a slave for life. The upkeep

of the white slave was more expensive than that of the Negro, and inasmuch as the Negroes who were brought from Africa stood at a much lower cultural state of development, they demanded less and in addition to that were distinguished by great strength and endurance, while the whites, unaccustomed to the semi-tropical climate of the Southern colonies, quickly contracted malaria and other tropical diseases and were dying out in large numbers.

! In most of the plantations the slaves worked in the fields in small groups of about 10 persons. The slaves were driven by an official driver with a whip. The driver was generally a slave himself. An overseer would supervise the work of several groups. He was generally white and was a hired employee. The slaves lived in special common barracks which usually consisted of underground structures in which the imported slaves were kept in chains, or of cabins on the land in which were kept the «trained» slaves from whom the chains had been removed, or slaves raised in bondage. On the rice plantations each slave was assigned a separate job each morning, and in the evening the driver would check up to see if the slave had carried out his work. If the work was not done the slave was subjected to severe punishment. At night the slave had no right to leave the house. At night the planters unleashed dogs from their chains and any white man who met a slave outside the barracks during the night could kill him unless the slave had a note from the master stating that the planter had sent him on some special errand.

#### **The Class Contradictions in the Southern Colonies.**

The free farmers in the Southern colonies were few in number. In the first half of the 17th century, with the rapid development of plantation slavery these free farmers were pushed out from the fertile valleys into the mountainous Piedmont in the inner part of the country by the planters. The presence of a great number of Negro slaves (up to 500,000 out of a population of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  million) and a great number of white slaves and poor farmers sharpened the class contradictions in the South between slaves and planters and between the planters and farmers. Discipline on the plantations was maintained by means of severe corporal punishment and even execution which was carried out at the will of the planters themselves. In order to hold in obedience the white population, the small peasants and farmers who did not cease the struggle for the land, the planters passed a law establishing severe punishment for them: death sentence, whipping, exposing them in the market place in pillories, which were placed over the neck, and other punishments.

The political power in the South was in the hands of the large planters. Only the rich planters (and in some of the colonies, also the rich merchants) could be elected to the legislative bodies which were under governors appointed by the English king.

#### **The Northern Colonies (New England).**

Up to the end of the colonial period the English colonies were primarily agrarian colonies. More than nine-tenths of the population of all the colonies was engaged in agricultural economy (from 90% in the Northern colonies to 97% in the Southern). In the Southern colonies, where slave labour was widely applied, there was almost no industry with the exception of home industry. A different picture was observed in the Northern colonies: Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, Connecticut, which in 1642 formed a union under the name of «New England». The climate here was not suitable for the cultivation of tobacco and rice. Following the example of the Indians

the first settlers planted maize (corn) in these colonies. They burnt down the forests (the country was covered with woods) and then between the burnt trunks of trees on the land fertilized by the ashes, they planted corn. For a year or two they gathered a good harvest and then they would leave the exhausted land and go to a new place where they would again burn down new forests.

Along with agriculture in the North artisan and manufacturing industry was developing, i. e., capitalist industry without the application of machinery. The first place was occupied by building and the lumber industry. Splendid construction timber made it possible for the colonists to build ships cheaply and towards the end the 18th century three-fourth of the North American trade with Europe was transported on American ships. A rich fishing trade on the shores of the Northern states also demanded the construction of fishing and whaling boats. Tar, potassium, boards for barrels, crates, lumber for construction were produced to satisfy the needs of the cities and artisan settlements in America and for export to England. In addition, from the very formation of the colonies there developed a textile industry. Towards the end of the 18th century the country was everywhere producing crude kinds of woollen goods. At about the same time appeared cotton textile, spinning and weaving manufacture in which worked about 200—300 workers and apprentices. Foundries, blacksmith and iron shops, glass, leather, gun and other manufacture developed successfully in America mainly in the Northern colonies.

However, the large landlords were the ruling class in the North as well as in the South. The difference consisted only in the fact that in the Southern colonies the power was in the hands of the planters, the slave-owners while in the North the power was in the hands of the large landowners who rented their land to the colonists.

#### **The Middle Atlantic Colo- nies.**

The Middle Atlantic colonies, particularly Pennsylvania and New Jersey, were «wheat» colonies.

The application of slave labour in the agricultural economy was insignificant here and the slaves were used only as house servants, as artisans and common labourers in the foundry shops, for loading, etc. In the Middle Atlantic colonies, the main mass of the population consisted of small farmers. In Pennsylvania, along the valley of the Ohio River, lay practically the only convenient road to the West, over which the settlers moved eastward in the colonial period.

The attempts to establish feudal relations in these colonies were not successful. In Pennsylvania the colonists seized the land of their own free will, paying no attention to the rights of the owners, and at the end of the 17th century in a revolutionary way they threw off the power of the owners of the colony. In the 18th century Pennsylvania was the only colony where farmers and artisans had established universal suffrage. Philadelphia, the main city of Pennsylvania, with a population of over 20,000, was the most important commercial and trading centre in America. Here lived merchants who traded with the southern colonists and the rich Southern planters.

Towards the end of the 18th century sharp contradictions prevailed in the Northern and, partially, in the Middle Atlantic colo-

nies between the large landowners who were the mainstay of the English government and between the landless farmers on the one hand and the bourgeoisie and merchants on the other.

**The Contradictions Between the Colonies and England.**

In addition to the class contradictions within the colonies a great dissatisfaction of a considerable strata of the population of the colonies with their mother country England, also prevailed. The basic cause for the dissatisfaction lay in the question of the settlements of the «free» land to the south of the Alleghany Mountains. In 1763 the English king issued a law by which the new lands in the inner part of North America, captured from France, were declared the property of the English king. The king prohibited settlement on this land.

This law was passed in the interests of the large landowners of the Northern colonies to hinder the migration of peasants to the West and for this reason it aroused the peasantry of the colonies against the English king. The planters of the South were dissatisfied with this law inasmuch as the plantation economy was rapidly exhausting its lands and the planters needed the new fertile land beyond the Alleghany Mountains. Towards the end of the 18th century the lands in the old regions of Virginia, North and South Carolina and other colonies in the South were so exhausted that frequently the planters were forced to release their slaves and cease plantation economy.

Another reason sharpening the contradictions was the commercial-industrial policy of England. The English Parliament, guided by the interests of the English industry, began to pass a number of laws, prohibiting, for example, trade, in woollen goods in the American colonies (1699), the construction of steel mills, the export of machines and immigration of skilled mechanics from England into the colonies, etc. In addition the English government burdened the colonies with all sorts of taxes. Parliament in 1763 passed the Stamp Act by which the American colonies were heavily taxed, through a system of duties on all commercial deals, and even the sale of newspapers.

This gave the impetus to an open rebellion of the colonies. In Boston, the main city of the northern colonies, tax collectors were tarred and feathered and driven through the city, an orchestra of frying pans and basins accompanying the procession. A boycott was declared on English goods and even the wealthy American colonists stopped wearing expensive English clothes and began to wear local clothes made of crude woollen goods.

But the English Government did not want to make concessions. It is true that it repealed the Stamp Act but it sent troops to the colonies (in 1765) and the king passed a law demanding unconditional subordination of the colonies to the orders of the king and Parliament. A short time later England sent to Boston a shipment of tea, free of duty, at a time when the American merchants were forced to pay custom duties. This was in December 1773. When the English ships with cheap tea arrived in Boston a meeting was called at which were present 7,000 people out of a 15,000 population in Boston. During the meeting the ship was attacked by inhabitants of Boston, dressed as Indians and 342 boxes of tea were thrown into the sea. That is the



way the American merchants dealt with their English competitors. In punishment for this the English Government closed the harbour of Boston for trade.

#### **The Rebellion of the Colonies.**

The news of this act exhausted the patience of the colonists and served as a pretext for beginning the uprising. A revolutionary government was created in Massachusetts which began to store arms. In a number of places representatives of farmers and the bourgeoisie formed «committees of correspondents» which established connections and prepared the calling of a general congress of representatives from all colonies.

The Tories constituted the majority of the First Continental Congress which assembled in 1774 in Philadelphia.

#### **The Class Composition of the Tories.**

The Tories were opponents of the full break of the colonies with England. They wanted the annulment of arbitrary decrees and actions of the English Government and the establishment of control of the local aristocracy over the activities of English officials in the colonies. This party consisted of people who derived profit from the domination of England in the colonies. It included aristocratic landlords who had received titles to large territories of land from the English king; clergy, judges, officials, merchants who had monopoly rights received from the English Government on trade in certain goods, etc.

Assembling at the Congress the Tories drew up a petition in the name of the English king in which they humbly begged him to make concessions and not to levy taxes on the colonies without the agreement of the legislative assemblies of the colonies (these legislative assemblies consisted of the rich aristocratic landlords, merchants, and planters slave-holders.) In addition to that Congress asked for the annulment of the restrictions on commerce and industry which were established by the English king and Parliament, and to permit the settlement of lands to the west of the Alleghany Mountains. Further, the Congress in conceding to the pressure of more determined elements, declared a boycott on English goods and voted not to disperse until it would draw up a constitution for the administration of the colonies.

#### **The Beginning of Military Operations.**

On learning this, the English Government dispatched troops to America in order to compel by force the submission of the colonies. In 1775 military operations began. That war began about which Lenin wrote:

«The history of modern civilized America opened up with one of those great, truly liberation, truly revolutionary wars, of which there were so few among the great mass of robber wars brought about similarly to the present imperialist war, by quarrels between kings, landlords, and capitalists, for the division of captured lands and plundered profits. This was the war of the American people against the bandit Englishmen who oppressed and held in colonial slavery America as these civilized bloodsuckers are as yet oppressing and holding in colonial slavery at the present time hundreds of millions of people in India, in Egypt and in all parts of the world».

The first attack was made by the English who sent 300 soldiers to seize the military stores of the American colonists, located 20 miles from Boston. At first the English defeated the rebels but later, colonists who were well acquainted with the use of arms, hastened from the surrounding settlements, and beat back the attack. The English



were put to flight. The Second Continental Congress assembled when the military operations began (in 1776). At this Congress the majority no longer belonged to the moderate adherents of preserving the ties with England and of subordination to the king's power but to the Whigs or rebels who stood for the full separation from England and for the Republic.

**The Declaration of Independence.**

The Congress adopted «A Declaration of the Rights of Man» drawn up by the Whigs, in which it was stated that all people are created equal, that they all have the right to «life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness», that the people have the right to overthrow a government which violates their interests.

Further the Declaration of Independence enumerated the abuses of the king and Parliament suffered by the colonies and declared that «the united colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States: that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be, totally dissolved». In the original draft of the Declaration it was even proposed to abolish slavery in America. However, the delegates of Southern Carolina and other slaveowning states on learning of this, declared that if slavery be destroyed the Southern colonies would split away and stop the war.

**The Class Character of the Whigs.**

The basic force of the Whigs consisted of farmers who demanded that the free land in the West should be freely occupied without special title from the king. The Whigs also had a following among the workers in the manufactures, artisans and petty bourgeoisie of the city—those strata which suffered most of all from the yoke of the English administration in the colonies.

The rebels were also joined by a section of the American bourgeoisie which hoped to utilize the separation from England in order to deprive the English nobility of power and land and to capture this power and land for themselves. The Whigs included a majority of the southern planters and among them the richest man in contemporary America, *George Washington*, who was the commander-in-chief of the colonial armies.



Washington.

From this it can be seen that in the ranks of the rebels themselves there were strong class contradictions. The planters and the bourgeoisie wanted to grab the lands which the farmers also hoped to get. In the ranks of the Whigs were also merchants and proprietors of the capitalist manufacturers (textile, munition, etc.), and they also included workers whom they exploited. In the beginning they all came out in a common front against the basic enemy—English domination.

**The Organizational Centres of the Tories and the Whigs.**

The American Whigs and Tories were not definitely formed political parties. They had no programme, constitution of the party organization, party discipline, etc. Ordinarily the names Tory and Whig were attributed to all those who participated in the struggle on this or the other side. The main organizational centres for the Tories and Whigs were in the provincial assemblies and the Colonial Congress which was called in 1774 without sanction of the British authorities. The legislative assemblies as well as the Congress were attended by rich landowners, merchants, and planters. Only in some of the states — in Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and Rhode Island — at the beginning of the uprising were there petty bourgeois «committees of correspondence» which ceased to exist after the formation of the Congress. In this manner only the Tories and the rich bourgeois section of the Whigs were politically organized. The workers, peasants and the city poor were not united by a party organization and for this reason were weaker than the organized bourgeoisie and planters.

**The Sharpening of Class Contradictions During the War.**

The war with rich and powerful England was very prolonged and exceedingly difficult for the colonies. It continued for seven years up to 1782. The colonial partisans put up a good fight when it was necessary to defend their homes, they skilfully utilized hiding places in the mountains and forests and were skilled sharpshooters. However, due to the extreme need of equipment, food stuffs, and ammunition they frequently deserted when the war took them far away from their homes, and preferred partisan warfare to the regular battles in which the English army had the advantage. As the war for independence continued the class contradictions in the country were sharpening. The bourgeoisie and landlords tried to shift all the burdens of war over on to the shoulders of the toiling masses, (who were already impoverished by English officials and troops). The rebelling farmers and workers felt that they were fighting not only for liberation from the English yoke, but also for land, for better conditions of labour, for political rights, for freedom from exploitation. For this reason they fought determinedly against the attempts to unload upon them the entire burden of the war.

**The Confederation and its Structure.**

The victory of the colonists over England was greatly facilitated by the fact that towards the end of the war, they were successful in drawing France to their side. A prominent scientist, inventor and political leader, Benjamin Franklin was sent to Paris to enlist aid and he was successful in his mission, and France declared war against England.

The conclusion of peace was also facilitated by the fact that the Whigs, who were against the continuation of the war, came to power in England in 1782.

The last military operation came to a close in 1782 and in 1783 a peace treaty was signed in Paris between England and the new government, the United States of America.

In the beginning this new government was not definitely formed and was not firmly united. Its constitution consisted of the Articles of Confederation drawn up by the Second Congress which was called in 1776. The constitution became effective in 1781 when it was adopted by the last state which joined the union — Maryland. In accordance with this constitution at the head of the United States stood the Congress which consisted of the representatives of the various states. Congress did not have any legislative power. It was only an intermediary in the event of disputes

arising between various states. It could give no instructions not only to the individual states, but not even to the individual citizens of the USA. The governments of the individual states were not subordinated to it. Congress determined the amount which was necessary for the fulfilment of its function and would apportion this amount between the various states. But it had no right to compel any state to pay even a single cent if they refused to contribute the amount assigned to them. In this way the power belonged to the individual states within the limits of their territory. To a considerable extent the Congress only played the rôle of a Dept of Foreign Affairs. It had the authority to negotiate with foreign powers, the right to conclude agreements, and the right to coin money and to regulate its value. It is true that nominally it had the right to declare war and to conclude peace. Such a constitution undoubtedly resulted from the fact that the Northern bourgeoisie feared that the Southern planters would capture power in the central government, while the Southern planters feared that the contrary would take place.

## § 25. The Class Struggle During the Period of Formation of the U. S. A.

After the close of the war the class struggle in America sharpened greatly. *It was a question of who would secure the main fruits of victory and, first of all, whether the lands would go to the planters and speculators or to the farmers.*

The burden of war sharply affected the conditions of the farmers, artisans and workers. They carried on their shoulders the whole burden of the war and as a result of this found themselves in the hands of usurers, merchants and entrepreneurs. One of the petitions presented to the Legislative Assembly in 1786 by the poor folks of the state of Massachusetts declared the following:

«If the situation will not be changed in a direction more favourable for the people, then, in our opinion, within a short time half of our inhabitants will be bankrupt. How can it be different when in fact every day our real and personal property is sold and when our land is being taken away by judges for one third of its value and our cattle at half of its value...»

The condition of the workers and the village poor was worsened due to the fact that a large quantity of paper money was issued during the war. The money fell in price and in 1786 one paper pound (5 dollars) had a value of only a few cents in coin. On the basis of the oppression uprisings of the farmers and the city poor flared up in a number of states in 1786 particularly in the north-western part of Massachusetts. The rebels attacked court houses, disrupted the sessions and destroyed all documents on the collection of debt.

In the state of Rhode Island the rebels captured power in a number of places, called a conference of representatives from all the cities of the Royal province of Providence (formerly an administrative district in America was called a Royal province) and proposed a draft of «state trade» for the purpose of struggle against speculation in gold money. The draft of the proposal consisted in the request that ships be purchased on the resources of the state for the organization of import and export of foods. The state was also called on to organize the trade within the country, legalizing the payment not only in coin, but also with the products of agricultural economy and labour. At the head of the rebels was Daniel Chase, one of the participants of the War for Independence who distinguished himself in the battles around Boston. The Chase troops attacked the U. S. A. government arsenal in the state of Massachusetts. At the same time the soldiers in Philadelphia whose wages had not been paid rebelled and dispersed the Congress which was in session there.

The bourgeoisie of the North and the planters of the South were quite satisfied with the 1781 constitution (The Articles of Confederation) until they were threatened with the danger that the people in various states would capture power (farmers, workers, and artisans). When this danger became real the bourgeoisie and planters began to feel the necessity of a strong centralised government which would be in a position to suppress the uprisings of the people wherever they would occur. *The constitution of 1781 which did not anticipate such a government, was found unsuitable for the suppression of the masses and the ruling classes decided to destroy it.* Thus, was created the situation for the change of 1786 which was carried out by the bourgeoisie and planters.

The threatening situation created in connection with the movement of the masses hastened the event. In 1786 a conference was called in Annapolis under the pretext of drawing up the new tariff rules and rates. In reality the ruling classes mobilized here their entire forces for struggle against the Chase uprising. The merchants and bankers, planters and industrialists collected money to equip troops against Chase and an army was sent against him led by the War Minister of the United States. Chase was defeated and surrendered in the beginning of 1787. He, as well as thirteen other leaders of the uprising, were sentenced to death. At the same time a new Congress assembled in Philadelphia consisting of representatives of the bourgeoisie and planters, which kept its session strictly secret, without even keeping minutes of the sessions. This Congress while having no legal authority declared itself as the official power and worked out a new constitution, the very American Constitution, which with the exception of some amendments, is still in effect in America up to the present day and which secured the power for the upper strata of the bourgeoisie and planters.

#### **The American Constitution.**

The American-Democratic Constitution legalized slavery and insured the conditions for capitalist exploitation. In accordance with this constitution only 100,000 people out of the total population of 4 million were granted suffrage rights. The power was divided between the president, who was endowed with great authority<sup>1</sup>, the Senate to which every state sent two senators, the House of Representatives which was elected proportionately to the number of inhabitants, and the Supreme Court. The latter had the right to annul any decision of Congress if it considered that such decision did not agree with the constitution. The House of Representatives and Senate were called the Congress.

In order that a law should become effective it required the approval of the House of Representatives, Senate and the President. A constitutional change required a majority of a two-thirds vote in the Senate and the House of Representatives and the agreement of two-thirds of the states. Every state had its own congress and governor who was endowed with great authority.

*During the war the power of the English land aristocracy in the colonies was overthrown.*

<sup>1</sup> In accordance with the constitution the President is the commander-in-chief of the army and navy of the USA, and the national guards of separate states in the event of their mobilisation. He supervises the execution of the laws and has the right of pardon. He appoints Secretaries who are responsible to him. He has a right of vetoing laws adopted by the House of Representatives, and the Senate, etc.





Shay's Rebellion.

**The Agrarian  
Question during  
and after the  
War.**

During the war and after its termination 30,000 Tories, landed aristocrats and their adherents were driven out of the country and their lands confiscated and put on sale. The «free» lands beyond the Alleghany Mountains were declared the property of the state and also put up for sale. The law of 1787 declared the lands in the Western states the property of the state and put them on sale in large plots of 640 acres at \$2 an acre. This law satisfied the interests of the planters, land spe-



culators and bourgeoisie, in as much as the farmer did not possess large sums of money and small plots of land were not sold.

*Thru the destruction of the domination of the landed aristocracy a number of feudal remnants which hindered the development of capitalism were liquidated.* The laws abolished quit-rent and the personal duties of the peasants. Titles of nobility were abolished as well as the compulsory transference of inheritance to the older son. In a number of states the land property restrictions for participation in elections to the local legislative assembly were abolished. White slavery was either abolished or limited. In 1774 slavery was abolished in the state of Massachusetts, and in 1784 in Connecticut and Rhode Island.

In some of the other states the import of slaves was either entirely prohibited or was assessed with high custom duties.

However, with the closing of the war for independence not all the remnants of feudalism in America were destroyed nor was all slavery liquidated. In the South slavery remained fully in force and there the slave holding plantations continued to grow even after the termination of the War of Independence.

## § 26. The Civil War.

### **The Development of Industry in the North.**

Although after the war the United States became politically an independent state, nevertheless it had a weak industry and economically, remained dependent upon England and other industrial countries of Europe. For this reason, after the war, the American bourgeoisie began to build factories and plants striving to equip them with the machines which were already in use in the European industry.

In the first American textile factory machines were set into motion by nine children ranging in age from seven to eleven years, but shortly afterwards water power was introduced. The installation of the mechanical spinning and weaving looms created the necessity for rapid cleaning of cotton in as much as cleaning by hand was slow and could not provide sufficient cotton for the factories. In 1793 *Eli Whitney* invented the cotton gin, a machine for cleaning cotton with which one worker could clean as much cotton as 50 men working by hand labour. This facilitated the extension of spinning and weaving and served as an impetus for increasing the lands under cotton cultivation.

Towards 1815 factories began to appear in the United States with more improved machines and with the simultaneous application of a number of machines in one factory. In 1815 the first textile factory in which mechanical spinning machines stood alongside with mechanical weaving looms, was built in the state of Massachusetts. The finished yarn was immediately transferred to the weaving looms and here was woven into goods.

In 1805 the United States had 4,500 spindles on mechanical looms. In 1860 there were already 5,200 spindles in the textile factories of the U. S. A. and in the sixties the U.S.A. already occupied second place in the world, conceding only to England.

Already before the construction of a railway line the country was covered with a net of canals which united the Mississippi and the St. Lawrence rivers, the Great Lakes — Michigan, Huron, Erie, with the Atlantic Ocean. When in 1826 the first big Erie canal uniting the Great Lake system with the Hudson River along which New York is located, was opened, then the main mass of settlers to the West who had previously travelled through Philadelphia now began to travel through New York up the Hudson River. Since that time the significance of New York increased greatly.

### **The Introduction of Mechanical Power and Steam Transport.**

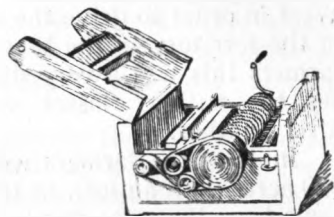
The development of the cotton textile industry demanded the introduction of mechanical power and gave an impetus to the development of other spheres of industry as well as the mechanization of transport.

With the thirties and forties the installation of steam engines in the factories took place on a mass scale. The task of bringing cotton up to the factories and of speeding up the shipment from America to Europe was solved by the introduction of the steam river and sea ships. The first ship was built by Fulton in 1807. In 1809 the first ship built along Fulton's design had already made a trip across the ocean — from America to Europe.

In 1830 the construction of railways in America began.

With the development of railways in the U.S.A. began the rapid development of locomotive construction. The first locomotive was built in the U.S.A. in 1830, and in 1862 the Baldwin shop had already completed the construction of the thousandth locomotive. During this single year of 1860 the U.S.A. produced 470 locomotives.

In spite of considerable progress of industry the United States was still an agrarian country at the time of the Civil War 1861—65. In industry the branches which reworked the products of agricultural economy predominated, (the yearly production of flour was valued at more than a 100 million dollars), then came the shoe, cotton, textile and lumber industries whose products were valued at more than 50 million dollars a year. And following them came woollen goods, machinery, leather industry, etc., with a production of from 25—50 million a year. Metallurgy occupied a third place, but a definite turn was already observed in this industry. In the forties the mining of coal in Pennsylvania and Ohio began to develop and the smelting of iron in small charcoal turnaces was replaced by coal smelting in blast furnaces.



The Cotton Gin.

### **The Uneven Development of Industry in Various Districts.**

*The development of industry in various districts was very uneven.* Altogether in 1860 America had 1,300,000 industrial workers, but the percentage of industrial population in various districts differed. In the Northern states for every worker occupied in

industry there were seven workers in agricultural economy. In the Western states the proportion was 1 to 15, and in the backward South — 1 to 80.

### **The Free Lands in the United States and the Formation of the Proletariat.**

The development of the United States in the epoch of industrial capitalism proceeded under the conditions of the westward movement of great masses of settlers and under the conditions of settling and assimilating vast territories of virgin forests and land, the inhabitants of which — the Indian tribes — were exterminated and driven into the cold regions of the far Northwest and into the distant cliffs of the Rocky Mountains. This circumstance — the constant movement to the West — played a great rôle in the history of America.

The movement to the West took place under the conditions of a bitter class struggle which had begun during the years of the War of Independence. Already at the Congress of 1776, i. e., shortly after the declaration of war, when its outcome was still unknown, the representatives of various states almost came to blows in dividing the future spoils. The bone of contention for the lands lying to the west of the Alleghany mountains, which were considered the property of the English king and which were now claimed by all states. The question was finally settled through the rejection of all claims of separate states and these lands were declared the common property of the North American States. Following this a struggle began for the distribution of these lands. After the termination of the War of Independence, the law of 1787, as we have already seen, had in reality turned these lands into the hands of the planters, the bourgeoisie and land speculators. The farmers and workers initiated a struggle for these lands. In view of the fact that the lands in the West were sold in large plots and at high prices, the farmers, who in most cases did not have such large amounts of money, were seizing and cultivating these lands, ignoring the established conditions of sale. The federal government frequently sent troops to the West in order to drive the farmers off the land, but due to the vastness of the territory in the West and the energetic resistance shown by the farmers this was a very difficult task. Under the pressure of the masses the ruling classes were compelled to grant one concession after another.

In 1800 the farmers were permitted to purchase plots of land of 320 acres (half a plot), in 1804-160 acres, in 1820 — 80 acres and at the same time the price was lowered to \$ 1. 25 per acre. The right of option, that is, of the advance purchase by settlers of land occupied by them was recognized in 1841. But only in 1862 did the government grant the right to purchase land at a low price, with a payment of a small tax for the registration of the title. The Homestead Act was passed in 1862 as a result of the Civil War.

However, the westward movement of farmers, city poor and workers was connected with very many difficulties due to the fact that the speculators were the first to take advantage of favourable conditions in the purchase of unoccupied land; they were buying up all the convenient and best lands and selling them at high prices.

The following note which appeared in one of the papers in the state of New Jersey in 1819, demonstrates the difficulties of the poor in the migration to the West.

#### MIGRATION TO THE WEST.

«From the Greenville district passed through this place, in the direction of Chatachuchi, a man with his wife and son, and his son's wife. They had a wagon without a horse. The man threw the harness over his shoulder and pulled the wagon, assisted by his son who was hitched in the shafts with straps tied to the wagon; the son's wife sat in the wagon while the older woman walked carrying a gun and leading a cow».

But in spite of all the difficulties for the poor masses connected with the movement to the West, this movement was pouring on in an uninterrupted stream. The migration to the West embraced both the old settlers as well as the immigrants who came to America from Europe in great numbers.

From 1790 to 1800, 50,000 Europeans came to America while during the two subsequent decades — 70,000 and 114,000. Towards 1828 the migration to America increased to 25,000 persons a year and in 1832 up to 60,000 a year. Beginning with 1842 over 100,000 immigrants began to come into America yearly, greatly increasing its population. During 1854 alone 427,000 immigrants came in. Altogether at the time of the Civil War 5 million persons emigrated from Europe to America (in 1914 this number reached about 36 million). The immigration to America was very large and while up to the middle of the 19th century the emigration from Europe consisted mostly of peasantry, after the European revolution of 1848 and the completion of the industrial revolution in England which was accompanied by the formation of the reserve army of labour in a number of other European countries — the immigration to America consisted mostly of workers.

Marx and Engels pointed out that up to 1848 the working class of America was distinguished by a great fluctuation and did not have a constant composition.

The city workers from the Eastern states on accumulating some means for the purchase of simple equipment would leave the factory and go West.

The departure of workers from cities to the free lands was hindering somewhat the development of capitalism during the first period in as much as industry felt the shortage of skilled workers. Beginning with the fifties the growing immigration of workers and the rapid differentiation in the ranks of the farmers made up for this shortage. On the whole the process of colonization of the West along democratic lines accelerated the development of capitalism and greatly enlarged its scope.

Together with the growth of the population in the new territories, took place the replacement of the semi-natural economy which was characteristic of the first settlers, by intensive commodity economy and in this way the new territories provided a great market for industry. Capitalist farms using hired labour began to appear. New cities were sprang up. A new and ever extending market demanding the products of industry, was growing up. The possibility for the worker to leave the factory and to become a farmer facilitated his struggle for higher wages. Labour power, which was greatly in demand, was paid on the average, higher in America than in Europe. Due to this, the purchasing capacity of the workers was also higher. This relatively high cost of labour power in America stimulated the efforts of manufacturers in the introduction of machinery and mechanization of production, the technical pre-requisites for which were already created in the first half of the 19th century. In this way the presence of free lands, in the final analysis, facilitated the stormy development of capitalism in America.

«We witness here very clearly», writes Lenin, «a peculiarity which was already pointed out to us on a number of occasions, the peculiarity of the United States which consists in the presence of unoccupied free lands. *The peculiarity explains the exceedingly broad and rapid development of capitalism in America*».

However, the stormy development of capitalism in the agricultural economy as well as the stormy development of American industry which was connected with it took place only in two regions — in the Northwest and in the North.

The development of the South, however, was hindered by slavery which interfered with the replacement of slave labour by hired labour and machines.

**The Exploitation of the Workers.**

The condition of the working class in America, although it was better than in Europe, nevertheless remained very difficult. Woman and child labour was subjected to severe exploitation. One of the American newspapers of the thirties describes the exhaustive labour of young women workers in the factory. «The women's work at Lowell varied from 11 hours and 24 minutes in December and January to 13 hours and 31 minutes in April, the average for the year being 12 hours and 13 minutes per day or about 73½ hours per week».

«In spite of the long working days the children are not even given time for breakfast as the bosses assume that they must have their breakfast before work.

«It appears, however, that the time of employment is generally twelve or thirteen hours each day excepting the Sabbath which leaves little opportunity for daily instruction», concludes the commission which investigated child labour in the state of Massachusetts in 1825. In 1831 women and children constituted 53% of all workers in the Northern states.

In one of the letters addressed to the American paper «Free Paper of Mechanical Workers» in 1830, signed by «many workers» it is stated:

«The number of youth and children of both sexes under sixteen years of age employed in Manufacturies, constitute about two fifths of the whole number of persons employed, — the youth and children that are employed in the cotton mill are compelled to labour at least thirteen and a half, perhaps fourteen hours per day, factory time».

«No child can be taken from a cotton mill, to be placed at school, for any length of time, however short, without certain loss of employment».

Further about children: «Scarcely time allowed them to take their scanty meals, they retire to their beds at night worn down and exhausted with excessive labour; hence they are deprived of any privilege except working, eating and sleeping».

(Commons and Associates, History of Labour in the U. S., p., 183).

The condition of the working class was becoming worse even during the period of slavery. The possibility of replacing, in some instances, hired labour by the cheap labour of slaves, made the condition of hired labour still worse. Especially hard were the conditions of the working class during crises. Mechanics of New York announced, that in the period of the crisis of 1847 in New York city alone, 60 thousand were poverty stricken, and in the state of New York one-sixth of the population lived on charity. The worker who contracted debts was condemned to great misfortune. For this he was chained and thrown into a hell-hole, which was called a long term prison. In this prison the slightest offences were punished severely, prisoners were branded with hot irons and subjected to corporal punishment. In 1833 up to 70,000 people were imprisoned in America for debts.

The bourgeoisie was skillfully taking advantage of the fact that many workers, who originally came from Europe did not know the English language.

Frederick Engels characterized very clearly, in relation to the later period, the differentiation of the American workers into the «higher» and «lower» strata, and he also described the particular skill of the bourgeoisie in exploiting the «lower» strata, among them millions of proletarians who had emigrated from Europe. «The immigrants were given poorly paid occupations. The immigrants divided into national groups in most cases did not understand either each other or the local language. And your bourgeoisie is able much better than the Austrian government to incite one nationality against the other — Jews, Italians, Czechs, etc., against the Germans,

Irish, etc., so that in New York, I believe, prevail such differences in the life of workers as would be unthinkable and inconceivable in any other country».

**The Labour  
Movement in  
the Beginning  
of the 19th  
Century.**

The difficult conditions of the American workers drove them into the struggle against the capitalists. Up to the twenties of the 19th Century the trade union associations and strikes were conducted mainly by artisan workers and beginning with the twenties the mass of factory workers began to join the labour movement, among them also workers of the cotton textile industry.

The sharpness of the struggle between labour and capital is demonstrated by repeated encounters between workers and police and by the fact that in a number of strikes in the textile factories which took place in the twenties weavers picketed the factories and compelled the strike-breakers to stay away on the threat of death.



Child labour in the factory.

**The First  
Organization  
of the Factory  
Proletariat.**

The organization of factory workers began in the U.S.A. in the twenties and thirties, and in 1827 a general strike took place in Philadelphia demanding the ten hour working day. Following this strike all the trade union organizations of the city were united. This central council of all the city trade union organizations was the first in the history of the trade union labour movement. In 1833 a general association of trade unions, which united the trade unions of all crafts throughout the country was formed in North America. In 1829 the «Workingmen's Party» was formed in Philadelphia and in 1829 a similar party was formed in New York.

However, the trade unions on the whole united only the small upper strata of the working class and the Workingmen's Parties included many petty bourgeois elements.

The class struggle of the proletariat prior to the Civil War assumed a very sharp character at times but did not manifest a special stability. This is explained by the fact that during the periods of crises and special attacks of the capitalists, the workers could, as a final resort, go westward and take up farming, in spite of all the difficulties.

**The Development of Slavery in the Southern States.**

While in the North and the Middle Atlantic states factory industry was developing and was forming a working class, in the South during the same decades unrestricted slavery reigned in the large populated states as well as in the territory of the Southwest.

The industrial revolution in England and in a number of European countries as well as in America itself was creating a demand for cotton. The high prices on cotton and the presence of great reserves of unexploited and still fertile lands in the south and southwestern parts of America made the production of cotton with the cheap slave labour more profitable than with the application of hired labour. For this reason the last decade of the 18th century and the first half of the 19th century marked for America the «flourishing» period of the slave-plantation system.

**Slavery in the 18th and 19th Centuries.**

The plantation system and the technique of agricultural economy in the South remained basically the same in the 19th century as it had been in the 17th—18th centuries. Agricultural economy remained extensive with a difference only in the fact that tobacco was to a considerable extent replaced by cotton and that production now turned to huge plantations numbering hundreds and thousands of slaves. As compared with the 17th—18th centuries the conditions of the slaves now became still worse. In efforts to improve the quality of cotton, to bring greater profits, the planter increased the inhuman exploitation of the slaves who after 8—10 years of work on the plantations began to perish in great numbers as a result of the exhausting toil.

**The Slave Trade.**

If the planter needed new Negroes he was able to buy them as he could buy any article or cattle. The papers were full of advertisements on the sale of Negroes. Here are some examples of such advertisements:

«A Wench, complete cook, washer and ironer, and her 4 children — a boy 12, another 9, a girl 5, that sews; and a girl about 4 years old.»

Advertisement from the Charleston (South Carolina City Gazette, March 10, 1796.)

«Fifty prime Negroes for sale; To be sold on Tuesday the 15th March instant, by the subscribers before their office near the Exchange».

«About fifty prime orderly Negroes; consisting of Fellows, Wenches, Boys and Girls. This gang taken together, is perhaps as prime, complete and valuable for the number as were ever offered for sale; they are generally country born, young and able, two of them capable of acting as drivers and one of them a good jobbing carpenter».

**The Brutal Treatment of Slaves.**

The slave owners dealt brutally with their slaves. The planter was responsible only for the murder of slaves. However, the overseers could always prove that the slave had been insubordinate and dangerous and in such cases the murdering of a slave was permitted.

Here, for example, is an advertisement in the «Virginia Gazette» of April 27th, 1767. «The planter, John Brown, promises a ten pound reward to any one who will kill Negroes who ran away from him and bring in their heads». (Apparently he was afraid that if alive the Negroes would revenge themselves on him).

Here is still another notice from the news columns of the «Evening Gazette» (city of Charleston, South Carolina) of that time. Here it is told that a Negro belonging to a Mr. Barren ran away, purposely undressing himself naked and smearing himself with grease in order that it should be more difficult to grab him. He was caught, but in the struggle he killed his master and wounded the supervisor with a knife which he held in his hand. After a short trial (ordinarily any white



man who invited one or two white neighbours as judges could be a judge) a hand of the slave was cut off, the bloody stump was dipped into a boiling tar pot and later he was thrown into a pot of tar, after which he was hung.

The slaves rebelled on a number of occasions but the planters suppressed the uprisings. Of particular significance was the uprising of *Nat Turner* in 1831 in Virginia. However, lacking organization the Negroes suffered defeat. Nat Turner was seized together with 60 other rebels and executed.

### **The Struggle of Planters and Farmers for the Western Lands.**

The constant movement westward and the continuous seizure of new lands was a question of life and death for the slave owners and planters.

We remember that at the end of the 18th century slave owning economy was going through a crisis. The old lands under the tobacco plantations were exhausted and unless new lands could be seized slavery became unprofitable. The termination of the War of Independence opened the possibility for grabbing new lands through the westward movement. And in that direction poured two streams of colonizers: from the South—slave owners with their slaves, from the North—farmers. *A bitter and uninterrupted struggle was going on among them for the western lands.* This was the struggle of two classes, the representatives of two types of economy.

### **Two Plans for the Solution of the Agrarian Question.**

The contradiction of class interests and the struggle between the farmers and planters for the free lands in the West, for the domination in these lands of either the slave owning or the farmer type of economy also found its reflection in the plans of agrarian and social reforms which were put forward in the South and in the North. In the middle of the forties a representative from the South in Congress, *Hammond*, proposed to follow the Southern example and introduce slavery in all the Northern states. He recommended to the bourgeoisie of the Northern states, the owners of shops and factories to become *owners* of their workers, to supply them with food and clothing and to reduce them to the position of slaves. He also recommended the distribution of all the lands which were still free in the West among the wealthy people in large plots to be cultivated with workers transformed into slaves.

Against this plan the farmers and workers of the North and West proposed a plan for the distribution of the «free» lands to all those who would engage in farming on the plots of lands allotted to them. In 1852 *Evans* proposed that «solution» of the labour problem through the free allotment of land and the necessary equipment to workers at the expense of the government. The farmers and workers of the North and West manifested great sympathy for the Evans plan.

*In this way the main conflict ensued between the planter slave holders of the South and the farmers of the West.* It was a struggle between two classes which represented two types of economy; the slave owning and the farming. The working class and farmers of the Northern states were entirely on the side of the Western farmers in this conflict. The further extension of the slave owning economy was threatening also the farmers and the workers of the North, in as much as this extension was strengthening economically and politically the class of

planters which was nourishing the most reactionary designs, as for instance the Hammond plan with which we have already dealt.

What was the attitude of the Northern bourgeoisie towards this conflict?

In the ranks of the Northern bourgeoisie could be clearly distinguished two basic groups with different attitudes towards the growing conflict. The commercial bourgeoisie of the North, which was selling the products of the South, cotton, tobacco and rice in the Northern states and abroad and which supplied the Southern planters with industrial goods, was wholly on the side of the planters and wholly against the farmers. Economically this group was so closely connected with the slave owners that it could not act otherwise. The industrial bourgeoisie of the North occupied a different position. It had a number of essential differences with the planters. The planters hindered the freedom of the economic activity of the bourgeoisie. For example, they were opposed to the construction of railways in the South, and to the construction of factories and they exerted pressure on the central government urging a policy advantageous to the large landowners and to the disadvantage of industrial development. They were opponents of protective tariffs which American industry needed to defend itself from foreign competition.

The planters were buying industrial products in England as well as in the Northern states, giving preference to English goods which were cheaper.

For this reason the industrial bourgeoisie was trying to secure high tariffs on English goods and even the prohibition of their import. The planters were decisively opposed to these claims of the industrial bourgeoisie. But it must be stated that the industrial bourgeoisie of the North nevertheless considered the solution of its differences with the planters possible through a compromise, through peaceful means. It lent support to the Western farmers, but only in order to exert through this pressure on the Southern planters and to force concessions from them. It did not sympathise with the radical demands of the farmers for the destruction of slavery and of slave owning plantations, understanding quite well that such a programme could be carried out only by revolutionary action. And the industrial bourgeoisie was already afraid of a revolution.

**The Slave Owners Start an Offensive. The Missouri Compromise.** During the period following the formation of the U.S.A. and the Civil War of 1861—65, the central power was most of the time in the hands of the Southern planters who were the owners of the largest industry in the country — the production of cotton. Up to the thirties political power in the North was not in the hands of the industrial bourgeoisie which was still weak, but was concentrated in the hands of the commercial bourgeoisie whose hands were bound by the planters. The planters were taking advantage of their political supremacy for the purpose of extending the slave system into the West.

In 1820 when the territory of Missouri was accepted into the Union as a new state the Southern planters were successful in realizing their demands that the fertile lands of the West lying to the South of latitude 36° be declared open for slavery.

It was decided that to the north of this line, to the extent that they are settled, free states would be formed and to the south — slave states.

In as much as the population of the free states was growing more rapidly than the population of the South and the colonization of the Northwestern states was proceeding more rapidly than those of the Southwest, the Northern states, already in the twenties, secured the majority in the House of Representatives to which deputies were sent, in proportion to the size of the population.

The South still controlled the Senate to which each state sent two representatives. In order to keep the Senate in their hands the South obtained a decision that as a general rule two states at a time should be accepted into the Union — one free and one slave owning.

The compromise of 1820 was called the «Missouri Compromise.»

However, shortly after this the slave owners were no longer content with the «Missouri Compromise.» As a result of the war of 1846 they captured the Spanish territory, Texas, and formed it into a slave owning state. In the fifties the slave holders continued the offensive still further by forcing (1850) the enactment of a Fugitive Slave Law by which the slaves who ran away from their masters into the «free» states should be delivered up on requisition by the state to which they fled.

#### **The Kansas-Nebraska Bill.**

The next step of the slave owners was the demand for the introduction of slavery in the districts lying to the north of latitude 36°. In other words they demanded the annulment of the Missouri Compromise to their advantage. Now they were also claiming Northern territory. When in 1854 the two new states Nebraska and Kansas, which were located to the north of latitude 36°, were admitted, the slave owners succeeded in getting Congress to permit slavery in these states contrary to the provisions of the «Missouri Compromise.»

On the insistence of the slave owners, Congress left the decision to the population of the two territories to determine whether these territories should be free or slave states. Once this decision was passed the slave holders immediately began to organize armed bands. These bands were sent to Nebraska and Kansas in order to establish slavery in these states by force. To combat this the farmers and workers of the North began to organize *armed detachments* in order to help the adherents for the prohibition of slavery in the new territories: in 1857 an armed struggle between planters and farmers began in the state of Kansas. In this way the partisan Civil War began already in 1857.

#### **The John Brown Uprising.**

In 1859 the armed struggle spread to the state of Virginia. Here a farmer, *John Brown*, attempted to organize the uprising of the slaves. Brown proposed the organization of a Negro uprising, entrenchment in the Alleghany mountains and from there to spread the uprising of the Negroes to both sides of the mountains. The Brown uprising was suppressed at the very beginning; Brown, badly wounded, was arrested, brought



John Brown.

on a stretcher to court and sentenced by the American «democratic» court to be shot.

Before his death Brown sent a note to his friends through the guard in which he wrote the following: «I, John Brown, am now quite certain that the crimes of this guilty land will never be purged away but with blood. I had, as I now think, vainly flattered myself that it might be done without much bloodshed».

The example of Brown brought about a number of attempts at uprisings of slaves in other localities.

In regard to these uprisings Marx wrote:

«In my opinion the greatest events at the present time in the world are on the one hand the movement of slaves in America which began with the death of John Brown, and on the other hand the movement of slaves in Russia.»

**The Struggle Against Slavery in the Fifties.** The movement against slavery grew particularly strong beginning with the fifties and found its reflection also in politics and literature. In the struggle against slavery two tendencies were formed: one — a bourgeois moderate tendency which stood for the limitation of slavery, another a definite tendency of the workers and farmers which stood for the abolition of slavery — the abolitionists.

The abolitionists, who consisted mainly of farmers, had even organized for the assistance of Negroes a so-called «Underground Railway» — an organization for the secret rescue of Negroes from Southern states to the North.

**The Dred Scott Case.**

In reply to the growing struggle against slavery in the fifties the planters were successful in 1856 in securing a decision of the Supreme Court that a slave is the full property of the master and that the master can bring slaves into any state, even into such a state where slavery is prohibited, to settle there and to demand from the slave obedience and work.

In other words, slavery was actually extended to all the states. This decision was accepted in connection with the case of the Negro *Dred Scott* who was brought by his master into a free state and was nevertheless recognized as a slave by the court. In this way the slave owners were making a decisive offensive in the North and demanded the extension of slavery throughout the Union. This brought about unusually strong excitement in the Western and Northern states. Already in the period of struggle for Kansas an organization arose in the Northern states to assist with men, arms and money, the fighters against slavery in Kansas. Out of this organization, in which the ideology of the farmer, Evans, played a prominent rôle, was formed a Republican Party which at first consisted of farmers, city and petty bourgeoisie, and workers. The vice-president of this party was Abraham Lincoln.

*Abraham Lincoln* (1809—1865) was the son of a poor farmer. He first worked as an agricultural worker on the farm, later was a lumber-jack, then he pulled cargo barges on the canals, after that he became a clerk, had his own store, and later became a lawyer and finally a professional politician. He was a member of the legislative assembly of the state and later of Congress.

In the elections of 1856—60 the Republican Party came out sharply against slavery. In the elections of 1860 it was victorious. The

Democrats of the North split, and their petty bourgeois section supported the Republicans. Lincoln was elected president of the United States.

The news of this created great excitement in the South. A party which demanded the abolition of slavery and the transfer of Western lands to farmers had come into power.

**The Beginning of the Civil War.** As a protest against Lincoln's election the planters of the Southern states decided to secede from the United States and to form a separate Confederate State.

On the 20th of December, 1860, South Carolina declared its secession from the Union. It was followed by seven more states and four months later on April 11, 1861, the Southerners fired on Fort Sumter near Charleston, the main city of South Carolina. The troops of the central government of the United States were stationed at Fort Sumter.

The Southerners, in declaring their secession from the Union, asserted that they were fighting against the tyranny of the Northerners who were encroaching on their order in forcing on them high tariffs and compelling them to buy industrial products at high prices. However, the real essence of the war lay in the conflict of two social systems—the slave system and the capitalist system—and in part, the main questions on which the North and the South collided was the struggle for the extension of these systems to the West and North. The planters wanted to force slavery on all states and territories which were being settled. While the political power remained in the hands of the planters they were carrying on a successful offensive on the free lands; but when the political power was torn away from the hands of the planters by the bourgeoisie and farmers of the West, they saw that slavery would now, at the very best, be limited to the old districts and consequently that it was condemned to destruction. This explains their offensive and the rupture with the North.



Abraham Lincoln.

**The Causes of the Wavering of the Northern Bourgeoisie.**

In spite of the fact that the abolition of slavery was demanded by the interests of the bourgeoisie, since slavery hindered the free development of capitalism, nevertheless, the industrial bourgeoisie of the North wavered for a long time before it finally began decisive action. This indecision is explained first of all by the fear of the masses. *The war was forced on the bourgeoisie and planters by the western farmers who were represented by the Republican Party.*

It must be recalled that these events were taking place after the revolution of 1848, following the June days when «behind the back of the bourgeoisie stood the proletariat» and when the bourgeoisie became «cowardly, flabby, and indetermined», and could no longer take its place at the head of the historically progressive, liberation movement. It was trying in every possible way to substitute the

struggle by an agreement with new compromises. And only the determined action of workers and farmers at last compelled the bourgeoisie, after a number of severe defeats and under the threat of the uprising of the masses against its domination, to agree to the abolition of slavery and to satisfy the basic demands of farmers for land.

The indecision of the bourgeoisie is also explained by the fact that at the beginning of the Civil War the North was joined by a number of border slave owning states — Kentucky, Missouri, etc., in which slavery existed. In destroying slavery, the bourgeoisie of the North had to break with the slave owners of the border states, which could have lead to a situation where these states could go along with the South. And, finally, the planters of the South owed money to the bankers and merchants of the North. In the event of the abolition of slavery or of War the payment of these debts was very doubtful.



Fort Sumter after the bombardment.

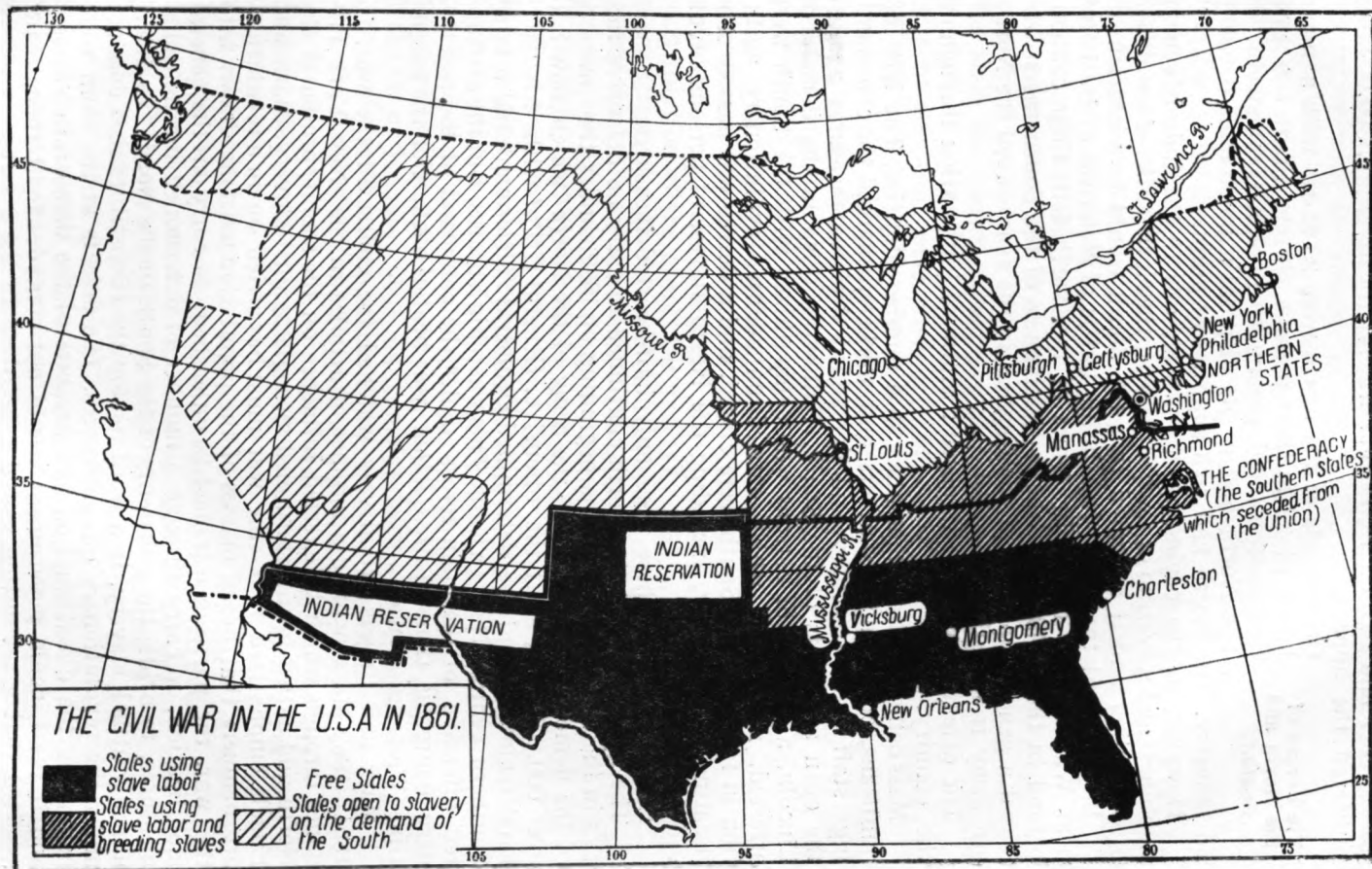
There were also certain groups of the bourgeoisie for instance the textile manufacturers, who feared that in the event of big changes in the South or of a war they would remain without cotton and that this would interfere with their industry.

#### **The Indecisive Action of the Northern Bour- geoisie.**

Months passed after the South declared its secession, but the central government continued to negotiate with Southern states and did not take any measures. At that time the duties of the president were still being carried out by the old president, Buchanan, who was sympathetic to the South. Three ministers, among them the War Minister Floyd and Minister of Finances, Cobb, were adherents to the South. They were openly sending arms and money to the South and were sabotaging the affairs of the North.

When Lincoln took office he continued the old policy of negotiation with the Southern states and took an indecisive position on the question of slavery. Only on April 15th, four days after bombard-







ment of Fort Sumter did the Lincoln government declare the Southern states rebel and call for 75,000 volunteers into the army. 300,000 men answered the appeal.

**The Forces of  
the North and  
South.**

On the side of the North were 23 states with a population of 22 million persons. In the South—9 million persons and among them 3,500 000 slaves.

The North had at its disposal a much more developed industry. The North had rich supplies of grain.

However, at the beginning of the war, due to the indecisiveness, flabbiness and wavering of the bourgeoisie, the North suffered one defeat after another and it appeared that the South would be victorious.

In July 1861 the North lost the big battle of Manassas at Bull Run near Washington. The main forces of the North left their cannons behind in the flight. Only the indecisiveness of the Southerners who feared a general uprising of the Negroes in the rear saved the Northern army from full destruction.

The defeat at Manassas aroused a storm of indignation throughout the country.

Mass demonstrations took place in a number of cities. The left Republicans, consisting of farmers and workers, charged the commanding staff with treachery and demanded decisive measures against the open adherents of the South. Following this, on the demand of Lincoln, a number of persons who sympathized with the South were arrested, newspapers which carried on counter-revolutionary agitation in favour of the South were closed, and a decree was passed confiscating the property, including the Negro slaves, of persons involved in the rebellion.

However, all of these were only half-hearted measures.

The government of the North continued to carry on defensive tactics in the war and only in the beginning of 1862, under the pressure of the democratic masses, did the army of the North which now had over 600,000 men, start the offensive. General *Grant* with his workers' regiments and the determined Democrat *Butler* captured a large Southern centre, New Orleans. This was a big success. But the attempted offensive of the main forces under the command of the reactionary bourgeois General *Mc Clellan*, was beaten back. For the second time Washington was almost taken.

Marx and Engels attentively watched the course of the war. In 1861—1862 Marx printed a number of articles in the «New York Tribune» through which he exerted influence on the social opinion of the North and called for a determined struggle against slavery. Marx and Engels emphasized that «the war must be carried on in a revolutionary manner» that broad masses of the population must be drawn into the war, the partisan war must be unleashed, to carry out the general mobilization, to carry through a number of determined international measures, to bridle the adherents of the South in the North, to determinedly attack slavery, in a word to stop the «Constitutional» conduct under the revolutionary circumstances. The defeats at the front were increasing the dissatisfaction and pressure of the democratic masses and if the Lincoln government would not concede to it then, Marx asserted that a revolution would take place in the North.

The dissatisfaction of the masses of farmers and workers of the North with the policy of the government reached particular force in connection with the defeats of 1862.

The Left Republicans, among whom there were many workers, came out with decisive demands for the liberation of the Negroes, the allotment of land to poor farmers, the prohibition of the sale of farmers' lands for debts, and the removal of reactionary elements from the army and government.

In the spring of 1862 when the news spread that the army of the North, under the leadership of McClellan, had suffered a defeat and was fleeing in disorder to Washington, leaving behind cannons and ammunition, the workers and farmers organized mass meetings of protest throughout the North.

The farmers of the West proposed to secede from the North-eastern states and to form a separate union of the North-western states. The mass movement of workers and farmers compelled the Lincoln government to change its policy. The fall of 1862 marked a turn from the first period of indecisive actions of the North to the conduct of the war in a revolutionary manner.

**The War in a  
Revolutionary  
Manner.**

As it was correctly predicted by Marx, Lincoln was forced to concede. The turn in conducting the war along «revolutionary lines» was expressed first of all in the carrying out of two important social measures — the abolition of slavery, the solution of the agrarian question in favour of the farmers, a change towards the application of terror against the counter-revolutionists and the reconstruction of the army. On July 17, 1862, a law was passed that «every person who after the publication of this act, will commit treachery against the United States will be subject to capital punishment.» The slaves of the planters who took part in the rebellion were declared free. By the same act Negroes were called to serve in the army and the fleet.

This was the first step towards the destruction of slavery. At the same time some of the generals, as for instance, Fremont and Butler, began, at the front in the Southern regions occupied by them to free Negroes on their own initiative. In the beginning the central government cancelled their orders and removed them from command. But on the 1st of January, 1863, under the influence of a number of defeats, at the front, under the pressure of the workers and farmers the government of Lincoln freed the Negroes as a *military measure*. The Negroes were freed, without land, and their owners compensated. Only those planters who actively participated in the rebellion did not receive compensation.

In addition to that, in 1862 the act on the allotment of land, the Homestead Act, was passed in accordance with which every one could occupy a plot of land of 80 acres on payment of ten dollars, and after paying, in the course of five years, the value of the land (\$1. 25 an acre), he could become the owner of this land. This was the democratic solution of the land question in comparison with the former conditions on land purchase for cash money and in large plots.

In spite of the fact that this was a half-hearted reform, nevertheless these measures were very important. They indicated that the go-

vernment of Lincoln broke away from the big bourgeoisie and was coming closer to the democratic masses.

Marx attributed great significance to these acts passed by Lincoln. «The rage with which the Southerners», wrote Marx «met Lincoln's acts, testifies to their importance.» At the same time Marx considered that they were insufficient and were accompanied by a number of conditions which, however, did not deprive them of their historical significance.

**The Reconstruction of the Army.**

In 1862—63 in connection with the defeats at the front and the discontent in the rear (particularly in connection with the unrest of 1863, during the new mobilization of the army), a purging of the army was carried out in which the counter-revolutionary and wavering elements were thrown out from its ranks. The workers organized separate regiments and squads of industrial workers, printers, and building workers. Special regiments were organized by immigrant workers according to nationality. The workers themselves selected the commanders of their regiments and among the worker commanders there were a number of socialists. Among the commanders of the Northern army of the Civil War there was a German communist Weidemeyer, a friend of Karl Marx, Willich, a member of the Central Committee of the Communist League, a German socialist, Seigel, etc. The workers' regiments of General Grant were very good regiments and they scored decisive victories on all fronts. The reorganized army, inspired by revolutionary democratic slogans and receiving support from the workers and farmers, began to score victories at the front.

**The Danger of Attack from England.**

<sup>a</sup>In 1862 arose the danger of an attack from England who was supporting the Southern states with money and arms. The victory of the North was not to the advantage of England. In the event of victory the North would stop the way for the English goods to the South and would be in full command of the cotton which was produced in the South. On the other hand in the event that the South was victorious and the North was defeated, England would have received a great market for the disposal of their industrial products and would in reality have transformed the South into a colony. England was seeking a pretext for a war against the North.

When in 1861 the Americans on searching one of the English vessels, discovered there a representative of the Southern government and detained him, the English government intended to declare a war against the North under the pretext of the insult which was committed against the English fleet (the searching of the English vessel).

**The Support of the North by Russia.**

During the time when bourgeois England was supporting the slave owners, the government of czarist Russia sent, in July 1863, two squadrons, one — to New York and another — to San Francisco to assist the bourgeois North. Prior to the receipt of special instructions the commander of the squadrons had the order to begin military operations against the South and to disrupt the connections of the South with England. He also had instructions to gather information as to which colonies were suitable for seizure and in which way they could be best attacked. Russia was supporting the North because it feared that in the event of the South being victorious, it would enhance the strength of England, the old enemy of Russia, which interfered with its advance in the East. In addition to that, the relations of Russia with England were very strained following the Crimean war. But it was not so much this threatening position of Russia as the energetic action of the British workers organized on the initiative of Karl Marx, against intervention in the American Civil War which prevented English intervention in favour of the American planters.

**The Turn in the Course of Military Operations.**

Following the passing of laws on land and the abolition of slavery which were carried out in the North under the pressure of the democratic masses, the war against the slave-owners entered a new phase. The broad masses of workers and farmers were fighting for the realization of the demands which were now recognized by the government as the demands of the nation. In the summer of 1863 the main forces of the South under the command of General Lee suffered a defeat near Gettysburg. On the following day General Grant captured Vicksburg and then for the second time occupied New Orleans. After that moment the South began to retreat. At the same time in the South-Eastern states the partisan struggle of slaves and farmers against the planters was extending ever more widely. Step by step the North was gaining more advantageous positions.

**The End of the War and the Beginning of Reaction.**

During the period of 1864—65 the main forces of the South were defeated and in 1865 General Lee surrendered with his entire army to General Grant. The commanding staff of the counter-revolutionary army of the South was allowed to remain at liberty. The Republican army, forgetting the danger of counter-revolution, organized a holiday celebration. Events have shown that such a complacency was too premature. Five days after the surrender of General Lee, Lincoln was killed during a theatre performance.

The death of Lincoln was utilized by the big bourgeoisie for the establishment of a dictatorship which was directed not so much against the planters of the South as against the workers and farmers. After the demobilization of the army and the dismissal of regiments of farmers and workers, the big bourgeoisie, which had in its possession the regular army, police, political apparatus and money, secured unrestricted domination.

Marx characterized these events in the following manner:

«The American Civil War brought in its train a colossal national debt, and with it, pressure of taxes, the rise of the vilest financial aristocracy, the squandering of a huge part of the public land on speculative companies for the exploitation of the railways, mines, and in brief, the most rapid centralization of capital. The capitalist production advances there at gigantic strides». (K. Marx, Capital, Vol. I).

**The 1st International and the American Labour Movement.**

The general council of the First International watched with great attention the course of events in the U.S.A., considering slavery as one of the greatest hindrances in the path of the struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie and consequently the victory of the working class over capital. When in 1864 the henchman of the reactionary bourgeoisie and the masked friend of the planters, McClellan, put forward his candidacy in the presidential elections as a rival to Lincoln and suffered a defeat, the general council sent a greeting to Lincoln which was drawn up by Karl Marx. In this greeting it was stated:

«The working classes of Europe understood at once..., that the slave holders' rebellion was to sound the tocsin for a general holy crusade of property against labour and that for the men of labour, with their hopes for the future, even their past conquests were at

stake, in that tremendous conflict on the other side of the Atlantic.

«Everywhere they bore, therefore, patiently the hardships imposed on them by the cotton crisis, opposed enthusiastically the pro-slavery intervention importunities of their betters' and from most parts of Europe contributed their quota of blood to the good cause...»

*«The workingmen of Europe feel certain that as the American war of independence initiated a new era of ascendancy for the middle class, so the American anti-slavery war will initiate a new era for the working classes.»*

In 1865 at the first conference of the International in London was adopted an appeal to the American people which called upon them to crown the victorious war by the strengthening of the democracy of the state order and as part of this to ensure political equality to the Negroes by giving them American citizenship and at the same time providing them with land.

In general the International, under the leadership of Marx, actively supported the workers'-farmers' movement during the war period and strove to exert its influence in order to strengthen the extreme democratic wing against reaction from within, and the encroachment of intervention from without.

In 1866 an amendment to the Constitution was adopted which stated: «Neither slavery nor compulsory servitude can exist in the United States.» In this way slavery was abolished but as a matter of fact in the period of reaction which followed the war, the planters were able to a large extent to restore their rights and the remnants of slavery remained, and up till the present time still exist in America.

Already during the war «the black laws», i. e., special laws for black people were passed in most of the Southern states. In accordance with this law every Negro who had no work was declared a vagrant and was fined, usually \$ 50. If a Negro was not in a position to pay the fine he was sent to prison and from prison he was turned over for compulsory service to anyone who paid the fine for him, i. e., who would purchase the Negro. The old master had the advance right of purchase. The master who purchased a «free» Negro had a right to subject him to «moderate» corporal punishment.

Here is the way one of the Negroes, *Fred Douglas*, described the «freedom» which the Negroes received: «The Negro was freed from the power of his personal master, but he remained the slave of society. He had no money, no property, no friends. He was freed from his old plantation, but he received nothing but the dusty road over which his feet travelled. He was freed from his old dwelling which served him as a shelter, but he became the slave of the summer winds and winter colds. He became free, naked, hungry, and propertyless under the open sky.»

In order to deprive the Negroes of the political rights which they formally received, a new planter-bourgeois terrorist organization was formed, the Ku-Klux-Klan. If a Negro dared to show any political activity he was threatened with murder, or at the best with a beating.

Lenin wrote the following about the liberation of Negroes:

«...In this respect the American bourgeoisie is not any better than the bourgeoisie of other countries. After «freeing» the Negroes it tried on the basis of the «free» and republican-democratic capitalism to restore everything that was possible; and to do everything possible and impossible for the most shameless and foul suppression of Negroes.»

It is sufficient to point out that up to the present time such forms of exploitation of Negroes as the tenant-farmer system, still exist in America.

At the present time there are 2 million share croppers in America, i. e., Negro tenants who live under horrifying conditions.

«The economic remnants of slavery» wrote Lenin, «do not in any way differ from similar remnants of feudalism.»

In the Southern states of «cultural» America on the cotton and rice plantations one can to-day see Negroes chained together in groups of ten working as they did in the time of slavery, under the whip of an overseer. Among them are Negroes sentenced to prison for debts and sold by the jail administration to compulsory labour for the term of their imprisonment. In the Southern states of «cultural» America Negroes are pushed off from the sidewalk if they dare to walk there instead of walking on the street. In street cars, which are separated into two sections, there are special places for the Negroes in order that they may not mix with the whites. The lynching of Negroes is widely applied. After «emancipation» the Negro still remained a slave without any rights, down-trodden, oppressed and enslaved.

### The Significance of the Civil War.

*The civil war was a peculiar form of the bourgeois revolution.* The leadership in it during the decisive period of 1863—65 belonged not to the proletariat, which was still weak in the sixties but to the radical bourgeoisie, who acted under the pressure of the farmers and workers. The political organization of the radical bourgeoisie was the left wing of the Republican Party.

The Civil War did not bring real freedom to the Negroes, it brought to them capitalist bondage, combined with the remnants of former slavery. It did not solve the Negro question as a national question. But it had a gigantic significance for the further development of capitalism in the U. S. A.

Lenin pointed out that «the overthrow of Negro slavery, the overthrow of the power of the slave-owners, made the long years of the civil war, which the entire country had to go through, through the abyss of disorganization, through the destruction and terror connected with every war, worthwhile.» The slave-owners lost their dominating position in the U.S.A., the power came into the hands of the industrial and financial bourgeoisie.

*The victory of the North and West was the victory of that path of the development of capitalism in the agricultural economy which is termed «the American» path. The basic significance of the civil war consists in the fact that in the course of it the slave system was destroyed and the agrarian problem solved in a revolutionary way.* The Western lands were torn out of the hands of the planters and were turned over to the farmers for settlement.

«The American» path of the development of capitalism in the agricultural economy is, in this way, a revolutionary path, in the process of which the free farmer economy sweeps aside the slave and serf latifundia. This path stands in sharp contrast to the «Prussian» path of the development of capitalism in an agricultural economy, under which the landlord economy develops along capitalist lines under the conditions of the defeat of the bourgeois revolution. Here, the power and the lands are preserved in the hands of the landlords. Under the «Prussian» path of development the peasant economy is bankrupted and swallowed up by the large landlord economies which are becoming capitalistic. By the «Prussian» path the landlord economy is surrounded by a multitude of peasant economies which are enslaved and dependent upon them. At the expense of the impoverishment

and bankruptcy of the enslaved masses of peasants, the landlord estates become capitalistic, the holdings of the well-to-do (kulak) strata separate from the mass of farmers and together with the capitalist landlord economies «devour» holdings of the middle and poor farmers (semi-proletarians). The «American» or the farmer way — is the path of free capitalism not bound up with feudal remnants the path which creates more favourable conditions for the general development of capitalism in a country, for the rise of its productive forces on a capitalist basis.

It did matter to the working class of America and the rest of the world, in whose favour the struggle of the North and the South would be decided, who would become the master of the U.S.A. — the planters or the bourgeoisie. The domination of the planters would have delayed the development of the proletariat and of the labour movement for a long period of time. The victory of the «American» way insured a more rapid development of capitalism and the more complete development of all its contradictions in industry as well as in the agricultural economy.

The rapid strides in the development of capitalism have now brought America to the unprecedented sharpening of its contradictions and the class struggle which can lead to the only outcome, to the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship in America.

Engels and Lenin wrote the following about the revolutionary possibilities of the proletariat. Engels pointed out that in «America the labour movement will proceed with colossal energy, the movement which one fine day will lead to a revolution that will astonish the entire world. Once the Americans begin to struggle they will carry it on with such energy and such rapidity that we, Europeans, will feel ourselves to be babies in arms in comparison with them».

Lenin also gave a very high estimation as to the revolutionary possibilities in America: *«The sharpening of contradictions and the squeezing out of small production is not eliminated but is carried over to a higher plane. As though the capitalist fire was slowing up at the price of the preparation for it of the new, colossal, and still greater inflammable material».*



## CHAPTER VII

### THE EPOCH OF THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL AND THE PARIS COMMUNE.

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#### § 27. The General Characteristics of the Epoch.

##### **The Development of Industry and Technique.**

The revolution of 1848 in Europe gave a considerable impetus to the development of industry and commerce. The stormy growth of industry is shown by the fact that during one decade, from 1860—70 alone the production of coal throughout the world increased from 126 to 283 million tons. Great changes took place in the decisive sphere of industry — metallurgy. The process of manufacturing steel invented by Bessemer by which a blast of air during the smelting of pig iron is forced from below, through the molten metal, decreased the process of manufacturing iron and steel from pig iron, from one and a half days to twenty minutes.

In connection with the successes of the textile industry the construction of improved mechanical spinning and weaving factories and in connection with the development of metallurgy, the chemical industry, also made considerable successes.

Capitalist technique was also making progress in the sphere of creating the means of destruction. From 1840—70 new strong explosives, were invented — nitroglycerine and dynamite, as well as smokeless powder, which permitted a decrease in the weight of bullets and guns, and provided for long range arms.

Rapid changes in the period of the fifties and sixties took place also in the sphere of transport. The development of railway transport greatly cheapened the cost of transportation of goods. According to calculations the German economists made at the end of the 19th century, railways decreased the cost of the shipment of goods to one twentieth of the former cost.

The application of steam in water transport also had great significance. In the sixties steam transport took the dominating position in relation to sailing ships and established a rapid and regular connection between the industrial countries and the colonies.

The development of factory industry, and following it, also of steam transport, brought about the growth of world commerce. World commerce grew from 2. 7 billion rubles in 1830 to 6 billion roubles in 1850, and up to 10 billion roubles in 1860. The stormy growth of world commerce is bound up with the subdivision of labour not only within the country, between the village and the city, between separate districts specializing on these or other industries, but also between separate countries. The textile factories of England, France, Prussia and Russia reworked American and Indian cotton, while Russian and American wheat competed on the European market. While the raw materials of separate colonies were brought to the advanced industrial countries to be reworked, the separate colonies on the other hand provi-

ded a market for textiles, metal articles, and other goods of the countries with large developed industries.

**The Industrial Hegemony of England.** England as the first country in which factory industry developed, became in the forties and seventies also the first country in the world in the extent of its industry. The cotton textile industry of England had 30 million spindles in 1860, while France and U.S.A. had 6 million each, Germany and Russia — one and a half million each. In 1870 Great Britain produced 6 million tons of cast iron, Germany 1,300,000 tons and France — 1 million tons.

English industry was the most mechanized. It already had developed metallurgy and machine construction which permitted England to take first place in the world in regard to railways and the capacity of steam transport. The foreign trade of England reached the amount of about 4 billion roubles in 1860 and was 2 times higher than the commerce of France and almost 3 times as large as that of Germany.

The development of factory industry in England resulted in the growth of its city population, which in 1871 constituted about 66% of its entire population, at a time when in France the city population constituted 36%.

**The Industrial Revolution in European Countries.**

After England the development of large industry began in America and in the European countries. In France the industrial revolution began at a somewhat later date than in England. The development of large machine industry which started in France in the twenties of the 19th century was considerably accelerated by the revolution of 1848—49.

In the forties large industry had considerable successes in Germany, but the development of capitalism in Germany was hindered because of the bourgeois revolution remaining incompleting. Following the defeat of the revolution of 1848, Germany remained split up into thirty-six states and duchies. This division and the preservation of the domination of the feudal classes, created contradictions with developing capitalism, in as much as this division of the country hindered the formation of internal markets for goods and the free exchange of labour power. These reasons explain the growth of the movement for unification in the sixties in Germany as well as in the kingdom of Italy, which was also split up into many small states and duchies, the movement which at the end of the sixties, after a series of wars, led to the formation in Europe of two new big states — Germany and Italy.

## § 28. The National Unification Movement.

**The Unification of Germany.**

The unification of Italy began with the Austro-Italian war of 1859 and gave an impetus to the national movement in the German states. We remember that following the unfinished bourgeois revolution of 1848, or «semi-revolution» as Lenin called it, the feudal classes remained in power in the German states. The revolution of 1848 did not solve the question of the unification of Germany. Each state of Germany had its own coinage, its own standards of measures, its own credit laws, its own trade laws, its own restrictions for the movement of labour power, etc. It is clear that all this greatly hindered the development of large industry. At the same time, in the period ensuing between 1848—70, great changes took place in divided and split-up Germany. Here, particularly in Prussia, which included the Rhine district,

and in Saxony, the textile industry and metallurgy began to develop. The output of coal trebled between 1848 and 1857—from 8 million tons to 23 million tons. The production of iron doubled, the application of steam power in factories increased six times while the number of mechanical weaving looms increased four times. Intensified railroad construction was going on and in 1870 the length of the railway lines in Germany had already exceeded those of France. At the same time the Prussian junkers and landlords began to carry on their economy along capitalists lines, changing to hired labour power, introducing improved means of economy and extending their estates at the expense of the disintegrating peasant economies. The preservation of large estates in the hands of the junkers, the painful impoverishment and disintegration of peasant economies, and at the same time the development, because of this peasant disintegration of a considerable strata of rich peasants — «grossbauer», this characterizes the development of capitalism in agriculture in Prussia.

The political domination in Germany belonged to the junkers and not to the bourgeoisie, which particularly after the revolution of 1848, remained cowardly and indecisive. It feared the proletariat and did not dare to rouse the masses of people to struggle against the domination of the semi-feudal landlords.

#### **The Two Plans of Unification.**

In the struggle for the unification of Germany the two camps, into which Germany was divided in the sixties came into conflict. In one camp were the junker and the bourgeoisie. The leader of this camp was the Prime Minister of Prussia, Bismarck, the largest landlord-junker, who was bound up with the banking and industrial circles. «The unity of Germany is realized not by speeches and not by the decisions of the parliamentary majority» declared Bismarck, *«but with iron and blood.»* He had in view a war against two powers which stood in the path of the unification of Germany — Austria, and France. The unification of Germany was not to the advantage of France in as much as by this, alongside of its borders would appear a strong rival, and in addition to that the French bourgeoisie was striving to take away from Germany the territory up to the left bank of the Rhine. This could be more easily done in dealing with a split up Germany. On the other hand, Austria had the ambition of taking a place at the head of the unified Germany.

The Prussian junkers were carrying on intensified preparations for war and equipped their army with new improved weapons. Simultaneously the Prussian government was also carrying on political preparations for this purpose. Desiring to secure the support of the democratic mass of Germany, Bismarck, in 1864 introduced universal suffrage, taking into account that it did not constitute a danger for the ruling classes, and lavishly showered demagogic promises of all sorts for the benefit of the petty bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

*In this way the plan of the junkers and the bourgeoisie, the realization of which was undertaken by Bismarck was reduced to the unification of Germany under the hegemony of Prussia with the preservation of the monarchy, the police, the bureaucratic state and the power of the semi-feudal landlords.*

This counter-revolutionary plan for the unification of Germany was opposed by another plan — the plan of its revolutionary unification. The working class, in resisting and carrying on the struggle against the counter-revolutionary designs of the junkers and the bourgeoisie, must strive to unite Germany not «from the top» by force of arms, but «from below» with its own forces and with the support of the petty bourgeoisie and the peasantry, i. e. with the forces of the democratic masses of Germany. The resistance to the junkers' plan for the unification of Germany could be successful only in the process of a revolutionary struggle against the monarchy and the power of the junkers. *The proletariat after uniting under its leadership the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie to overthrow all kings, dukes and princes in Germany, neutralizes the liberal bourgeoisie and overthrows the power of the junkers, transforming Germany into a single democratic republic in which it comes face to face with its main enemy — the bourgeoisie against which it carries on the struggle for a socialist Germany.* Such was the plan for the unification of Germany which was defended in the name of the proletariat by its leaders, Marx and Engels.

Not only the junkers, but also the bourgeoisie fought against this revolutionary plan. It was striving with all its power to detract the workers from revolutionary struggle and subordinate them to its influence.

In the beginning of the sixties the liberal bourgeoisie carried on an intensive agitation among the workers of the industrial regions of the Rhine district, Saxony, and Silesia. The bourgeois theoretician, *Schulze-Delitzsch* advised the workers to organize productive societies (cooperative production) declaring that these cooperatives and not the revolution are the only and the true way for the solution of the labour question.

He was opposed in Germany by *Ferdinand Lassalle* who, in essence, was an inconsistent petty bourgeois democrat, attempting to speak in the name of the proletariat.

In contrast to *Schulze-Delitzsch* who advocated the principle of the common interests of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie and recommended to the workers the path of cooperative construction instead of class struggle, *Lassalle* put forward the slogan of the political separation of the proletariat from the bourgeoisie and the formation of an independent proletarian party. But while putting forward this correct slogan, *Lassalle* at the same time perverted the aims of the proletarian party and the means of its struggle. He recommended to the workers the organization of an independent party in order to strive for universal suffrage rights. «The workers and the poor», he stated, «constitute a majority in Germany. On gaining universal suffrage rights they will receive the majority in parliament and through it will carry out laws regarding compulsory state assistance to the productive workers' cooperatives, in which they will work without the capitalists and will become free.»

For the purpose of securing the right of universal suffrage, *Lassalle* proposed to organize the All-German Workingmen's Union. The German Workingmen's Union was formed in 1863 in Leipzig at a

congress of delegates from the industrial districts of Germany, and it elected Lassalle as its representative.

The fact that Lassalle considered universal suffrage rights as the only and main means of struggle makes it clear that *Lassalle did not believe in the power of the working class, had no faith in its ability to lead the democratic masses (peasantry and petty bourgeoisie), he had no faith in the power of these democratic masses, did not believe in the possibility of the revolutionary unification of Germany.* Having no faith in the power of the lower classes, Lassalle placed his hopes in the upper classes. But at the top stood the junkers headed by Bismarck. For this reason Lassalle, behind the backs of the workers, entered into secret negotiations with Bismarck and promised him the support of the working masses, if he would introduce universal suffrage rights. Following the course of compromise with the junkers, Lassalle refused to seek the allies for the proletariat, consisting in the revolutionary elements of the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie. He directly asserted that all the other social classes and groups, with the exception of the proletariat are «a complete reactionary mass.» The policy of Lassalle was, therefore, a policy of a cowardly, petty bourgeois democrat, fearing the revolution, betraying it, and betraying the class revolutionary interests of the proletariat to the junkers, in exchange for universal suffrage rights.

It is not without reason that Marx and Engels called Lassalle «the Prussian-king's democrat.»

The opportunism of Lassalle and his adherents on the question of the aims and means of struggle of the working class and on the question of the unification of Germany, met resistance on the part of August Bebel and Wilhelm Liebknecht, who acted in agreement with Marx and Engels. August Bebel was the son of a soldier; on graduating elementary school he worked as learner, later as an apprentice and then as a lathe operator. Beginning with 1859, he took part in workers' educational societies in Leipzig founded by the petty bourgeois liberal «Peoples» party. In 1866 Bebel and Liebknecht were elected by the workers to the North German Reichstag. The student, Wilhelm Liebknecht (the father of Karl Liebknecht), participated in the barricade struggles of 1848 and was a friend of Marx and Engels.

Bebel and Liebknecht were closely connected with the Saxon miners and the textile workers of Chemnitz. In contrast to Lassalle, both of them, just as Marx and Engels, fought for the revolutionary way.

The proletariat of Germany was still undeveloped; it was thrown off the track on the one hand by the Lassalle agitation, on the other hand some sections of it were lured by the preachings of Schultz-Delitzsch and the demagogy of Bismarck. It was not able to create revolu-



Lassalle.

tionary unity in its ranks, could not destroy the counter-revolutionary plan of the junkers and the bourgeoisie. The unification of Germany, therefore, proceeded not from «below» but from «above.»

**The Wars of  
Prussia with  
Austria (1866  
(1870—71).**

On completing its military and political preparations, the Prussian government declared a war against Austria in 1866. The Prussian army, equipped and trained with the latest achievements of contemporary technic, smashed the main military forces of backward Austria within fifteen days. Following the routing of Austria, the latter renounced its claims on the unification of Germany, and Prussia united 21 out of 36 German states into the North German union. Prussia of the Junkers was the dominating force in this union.

The constitution of the North German union provided that at the head of the state should stand the Prussian king, who at the same time was the president of the Union. The majority in the Reichstag (Parliament), which was elected on the basis of universal suffrage, belonged to the landlords and the bourgeoisie. But this Reichstag did not have the real power. All of its decisions had to be approved by the Union Council. Prussia held the dominating position in the Union Council, which consisted of officials, representative of the German states; in addition to that Prussia also had command of the military forces of the Union. The kings and princes in the separate German states, united into the Union, continued to remain in power in their kingdoms. In this way the All-German Union represented a number of monarchist states, united under the domination of absolutist Prussia, in which the police and bureaucracy had virtually unlimited control. It was not without reason that Marx stated that in Germany absolutism, which is only dressed up as parliamentarism, reigns.

*In this way the destruction of the political dismemberment of Germany, which facilitated the rapid development of the productive forces of capitalism, and hastened the formation of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, was carried out by means of a revolution «from the top» so that the power of the landlords was preserved and under conditions which were most advantageous for them and to the greatest disadvantage to the proletariat and peasantry.*

The North-German Union united only Northern Germany. Southern Germany remained split up. The final unification of the entire country took place only after the Franco-Prussian war of 1870 with which we shall deal later on.

## § 29. The Seizure of Colonies.

In the «Communist Manifesto», Marx and Engels in characterizing the historic rôle of the bourgeoisie, wrote: «The need of a constantly expanding market for its products chases the bourgeoisie over the whole surface of the globe. It must nestle everywhere, settle everywhere, establish connections everywhere.»

In the forties and the sixties the bourgeoisie nestled and settled in the countries of the Asiatic continent and in other parts of the world which so far had been closed to it or not fully opened.

In the 19th century, particularly in the later half, European traveler-explorers penetrated into the most distant, formerly unknown districts. The greatest section of the territory of Africa became known beginning with the fifties through a number of explorations of which the expedition of A. Livingston gained particular prominence.

During the same period central Australia was explored by the English, and central Asia, Siberia, Turkestan by the Russians and Germans.

In the fifties of the 19th century the English discovered a water route around North America.

Following the travellers, priests and missionaries went to the new «distant» countries in order to convert the heathens to christianity. The travellers and the missionaries opened the road for the merchant, official and the soldier of the European capitalist states.

The number of new colonial researches and discoveries was a step toward the seizure of a whole series of new colonies.

In 1839—1842 the cannons of the warships of European powers opened the way to China for European manufactured goods.

The acute sharpening of class contradictions in feudal China brought about by the appearance of European capital, led to the gigantic uprisings of the Taipings which lasted for fifteen years, from 1850 to 1865.

In the middle of the 19th century, the American bourgeoisie also reached out towards the East. In 1846 California became the first Pacific state of North America and in 1848 gold was discovered there; «the gold rush» brought with it an unusually rapid settlement of California and of the entire Pacific coast.

In the fifties, plans were drawn up for the digging of a canal across the Isthmus of Panama to unite the Atlantic Ocean with the Pacific, thus enabling the northern industrial states to establish contact with China and Japan through the shortest route possible<sup>1</sup>. The increasing interest of the U. S. A. in the East was demonstrated by the sending of a military squadron to Japan in 1853 under the command of Admiral Perry who demanded the opening of Japanese ports for trade with the Europeans. Two years later, in 1855, a Russian squadron under the command of Admiral *Putiatin* appeared at the shores of Japan, and in 1863 when the Peoples' movement began in Japan against the arrogant interference of foreigners, the warships of America, France and Holland bombarded the city of Kagoshima and took part in the suppression of the Peoples' movement. In 1868 after a bitter class struggle (the revolution of *Mai-Dee*) a government came to power which based itself on this feudal lords (*samurai*) who understood that for the preservation of power they must assimilate bourgeois civilization since they found themselves powerless to struggle against its cannons. Since that time, Japan, in spite of the fact that the reactionary feudal classes remained in power, quickly entered upon the capitalist path of development, and in spite of the fact that it preserved numerous remnants of serfdom, already in the twentieth century, Japan was transformed into an imperialist power with sharply expressed features of «military-feudal imperialism.»

In India in 1857, a gigantic uprising of sepoys (fighters, soldiers) flared up. In 1862 the French seized Indo-China. At the end of the sixties they attempted to advance on India from the north, but after coming into conflict with England in 1866 in the attempt to capture the northern district of India — Burma — they retreated and entrenched themselves in Indo-China.

During the epoch of the sixties, the sphere of influence of capitalism engulfed not only Asia but also Africa and Australia. Already at the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century, England, after the loss of the North America colonies, intensively colonized Australia and New Zealand. Cape Province — the southern extremity of the African continent, which was conquered in 1806, became an English colony in 1815.

Already in 1830 France conquered a rich colony — Algiers — on the Northern shores of Africa and conducted uninterrupted bloody wars in suppressing the resistance of the Arabian tribes.

The penetration of capitalism into the East brought about the sharpening of all class relations in the feudal countries of the East. We shall stop to deal with the most important colonial uprisings of the epoch — the uprising of the sepoys in India and of the Taipings in China.

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<sup>1</sup> This canal was opened only in 1914.



### § 30. The Colonial Uprisings.

**The Uprisings of Sepoys.** In the 17th century began the intensive plundering of India by the European countries, mainly by the English and the French. In 1763 the English became the virtual masters of India, after driving out the French from almost all parts of this territory.

The exclusive right of trade with India was in the hands of the old East Indian Company which was founded already in 1600. This Company had full charge of the administration of India and maintained its troops there.

The East Indian Company was liquidated in 1823 due to the fact that its monopoly was not to the advantage of the developing English industry. After this, English goods flooded India and the export of raw material from India began to increase. The competition of cheap English manufactured goods led to the mass bankruptcy of Hindu weavers who could not stand the competition of English industry.

In 1857 the English installed 4,000 miles of telegraph lines in India and began the construction of the first railway. This was done by the English for the purpose of strengthening their domination in the country and the seizure of other districts of India which were still untouched by European exploitation.

From 1848—56 the English seized 150,000 square miles of new territories including Punjab, Burma, Oudh, (1856) etc. The income on taxes alone on the newly annexed districts gave the English 43 million gold roubles a year.

The British administration was particularly ruthless in the newly annexed northern and central districts. This led to an uprising which began in 1857 in the province Oudh.

In May of 1857 an uprising of troops took place in this province and was shortly joined by 50 000 sepoys. The rebels seized *Delhi, Cawnpur, and Lucknow*.

The English had only four regiments in the region where the uprising took place. The situation was threatening for the English. At that time there were in India 257,000 native troops and 36,000 English. The native troops had cannons and Enfield rifles. The native troops had the sympathy and support of the population. The mussulmen and the Hindus among whom the English colonists tried to sow seeds of national hatred, for the sake of preserving their own government, formed a united front and arose against their English exploiters.

However, in the course of the uprising, the contradictions between the peasantry and the feudal lords were manifested. The feudal lords began to seize the lands deserted by the English henchmen and demanded the payment of taxes from the peasantry.

New leaders came forward from the ranks of the peasantry and artisans of the cities; *Achmed* — a peasant, and the leader of the city poor and *Tan-Ti-Toni*. But it was already too late. The rebelling sepoys lost too much time, due to the indecisiveness of the feudal leadership. The feudal lords headed by *Bohadur Khan* and *Nana Sahib* followed defensive tactics. Instead of marching on Calcutta and mobilizing the native troops and peasant masses, they marked time in fear of these masses.

*The mass peasant uprising in Bengal and Bihar compelled the feudal lords to come to an agreement with the English.* The English took advantage of the treachery of the feudal lords, and concentrated troops in the north of India. After a siege which lasted for five months, and a severe battle which lasted for six days, they captured the main

center of the uprising Delhi, inflicting brutal punishment on its defenders. During the siege of Delhi the artisans and proletarian elements of the city fought in the front ranks of the barricades.

One of the English observers wrote: «This is more than a military rebellion; from the very beginning the movement has been assuming ever more the characteristic of an uprising into which were drawn great masses and not only sepoy troops.» «We would hardly succeed in smashing the enemy, taking his cannons from him when he would again be ready for struggle, no sooner have we succeeded in freeing one city and giving assistance to another than the danger suddenly flared up in a third place. As soon as we have suppressed the uprising in one section, the uprising flares up in the neighboring one.»

At that time the proletariat was not yet formed in India. The forerunner of the proletariat of the cities — artisans, loaders, and the city poor — took an active part in the uprising, but were not able to secure the leadership of the army. The bourgeois elements frightened by the mighty swing of the uprising, did not proclaim the revolutionary



The English shooting down Hindus who took part in the Sepoyan uprising.

uprising of the masses. The army followed the feudal lords whom the English deprived of their lands and the clergy who lost the lands and the income from courts and schools which were taken out of their hands.

#### **The Defeat of the Uprising and its Result.**

The last detachments of Sepoys were smashed only in 1859, following the mass execution of rebels, who were shot, tied to the muzzles of cannons, and after a number of punitive expeditions were sent into the heart of the country.

*The uprising of the Sepoys proved once more that without a leadership of the proletariat the peasantry is incapable of freeing itself from the feudal yoke and from foreign conquerors.*

The defeat of the uprising still further strengthened the English yoke and retarded for a long period of time the development of India.

The English, fearing the repetition of an uprising, struck a bargain with the feudal lords, promising them not to take away their lands if they would guarantee regular payment of taxes. On the other hand, fearing the peasant uprisings and desiring to strengthen the position

of the feudal lords, they destroyed the serfdom of peasantry in 1859. Because of this feudal lords (Rajahs) remained the owners of the land while the peasants were declared permanent tenants and were expected to pay a definite amount of rent.

Thus, while on paper serfdom was abolished in India, yet in reality even at the present time in the 580 principalities of India, compulsory labour has been preserved and on the plantations of the Rajahs and Englishmen millions of slaves are still maintained. The slaves are bought and sold and there is even a law on the extradition of runaway slaves.

The terrible famines, which periodically take place in India and during which millions of Indians die out, demonstrate the difficult position of the peasantry under the domination of the English and Rajahs. One of the most terrible famines, one which carried away the largest number of people, was the famine which followed shortly after the suppression of the uprising in 1866.

**The Transformation of China into a Colony of Europe and America.**

In the middle of the 19th century the entire marine<sup>1</sup> trade of China was carried on through the only southern port, Canton — by the commercial company Ko-Hong which paid duty to the Emperor of the Manchurian Dynasty on all freight imported into China. The Europeans conducted a lively trade with China through India beginning with the 19th century; they bought silk and tea in China and sold opium and to a smaller extent industrial products.

In 1818 English imported opium was valued at 7 million roubles, in 1830 the import of opium had already increased to 26 million roubles and 1837 to 40 million, at the same time, the import of other goods amounted to only 15—20 million roubles. When the Chinese government prohibited the import of opium, England sent its war fleet to China in 1839 and bombarded Canton. Following this, the English fleet and infantry occupied Shanghai (at the mouth of the Yangtze river) and carried the battle up the river to Nanking. Here they forced the Manchurian dynasty to conclude an unequal treaty in 1842. In accordance with this agreement the Chinese were obliged not to impose a tariff of more than 5% on English goods, to surrender to the English a part of the island of Honkong near Canton, and to open Canton and four other ports including Shanghai to British commerce. In addition to that, the Chinese had to pay a large indemnity and to free the Europeans from the jurisdiction of Chinese laws (to try them by special courts composed of Europeans). Unlike India, China did not become a colony of England alone.

In 1844 France and the United States demanded that China should sign the same treaty with them. Following this the same unequal treaties were signed with other European powers.

In this way China from the very beginning of its transformation into a virtual colony became the *general* colony of the largest European and American plunderers.

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<sup>1</sup> The land trade of China was very insignificant and was carried on mainly with Russia through Kyachta.

### Ruin of the Chinese Peasantry.

As soon as China was opened for the foreign trade of the Europeans it was flooded by cheap manufactured goods in addition to opium, the import of which grew very fast.

The great import of opium and goods could not be covered by the export of tea and silk, and for this reason the Chinese had to pay for a considerable part of the imports with silver. The value of silver began to rise in China, due to the fact that tens of millions of dollars worth of silver were exported to Europe.

The impoverishment of the peasantry was intensified due to the fact that the peasantry was paying its taxes in silver. The bankruptcy of the peasantry and of the artisans proceeded unevenly due to the vastness of the Chinese territory and the poor means of communication. However, it proceeded most rapidly in the southern part of China, in the port regions which were opened for European commerce.

Peasant uprisings began to flare up due to the bankruptcy and increasing oppression by the Manchurians and the feudal lords.

### The Beginning of the Revolution.

In the beginning of 1850 the separate peasant uprisings united into a powerful current of *peasant revolutions*. The handful of a few thousand peasant rebels in the southern province of Kwangtsi, moved to the north towards the main river of China, Yangtze, and was joined by the oppressed peasant masses and city poor, porters, coolies, boatmen, as well as artisans and workers from the mines and factories who were kept in a position of semi-serfdom.

These stratas of the population were under the burden of taxes and duties levied by the emperor and his mandarins-governors and their agents — the tax collectors. The masses of the people were robbed and exploited by merchants, usurers and the landlord gentry.

The composition of the gentry was not homogeneous. Among them were usurers, who bought the right for the collection of taxes, the small landlords who were endowed with land for their services to mandarins, the patrimonial heads of tribes, who enjoyed a great power over the families in China, who entered into the given patrimony.

Frequently the gentry was at the same time the usurer, and the head of the tribe, and the landlord who served the mandarin. The gentry were the lower strata of the exploiting feudal class of China.

While the basic kernel of the Taipings were the oppressed strata of peasantry who were mainly interested in the question of land and liberation from the feudal bonds, at the first stage of the movement (approximately up to 1856) they had fellow-travellers in the form of an opposition consisting of merchants and gentry.

The merchants were dissatisfied with the Manchurian government. They suffered from endless duties, bribery and plundering on the part of the Manchurian officials. The petty gentry in the beginning also joined the movement (the main leader of the Taipings was of the *Sin-tsuan* gentry). They were dissatisfied with the mandarin oppression, the obstacles which hindered their entrance into government service and the preferences which were accorded to the Manchurians, etc. The workers of that time played a big role in the uprising. The son of a miner — a worker by the name of *Yang-Su-Sin* who was closely connected with the coolies and drivers was the virtual commander-in-chief in the period up to 1856.

### The Successful Movement in the North.

The Taipings in advancing to the north smashed the Manchurian troops, but on reaching the river Yangtze (a gigantic river, in whose basin now live approximately 200 million people and in the middle of the 19th century there lived about 150 million). They did not go further

north to Peking in order to finally smash the Manchurians, but for two years they moved to the west towards Nanking and spent about a year in order to capture Nanking and entrench themselves in that city.

Only in May 1853 did the Taipings send a regiment of 12,000 fighters to Peking. This small regiment, having almost reached Peking, stopped at Tientsin and was forced to retreat. The northern peasantry did not support the Taipings in as much as the capitalists here did not exert such a strong influence as yet, and therefore the Manchurians were successful in repulsing the Taipings.

**The Army of the Taipings.** The main kernel of the Taipings army consisted of the impoverished peasantry, while the commanding staff was mostly from the impoverished gentry and small traders.

In the course of the uprising the army was joined by the city artisans and the semi-serf workers. The army which formerly had about 4—5,000 people grew to 3 million in the course of the uprising.

**The Social Measures of the Taipings.** The Taipings attempted to solve the land question in 1853, which was the period of the greatest rise of the movement. The basic proposals of the land law issued by them were:

«All the land to be divided according to the number of mouths, regardless of sex.»

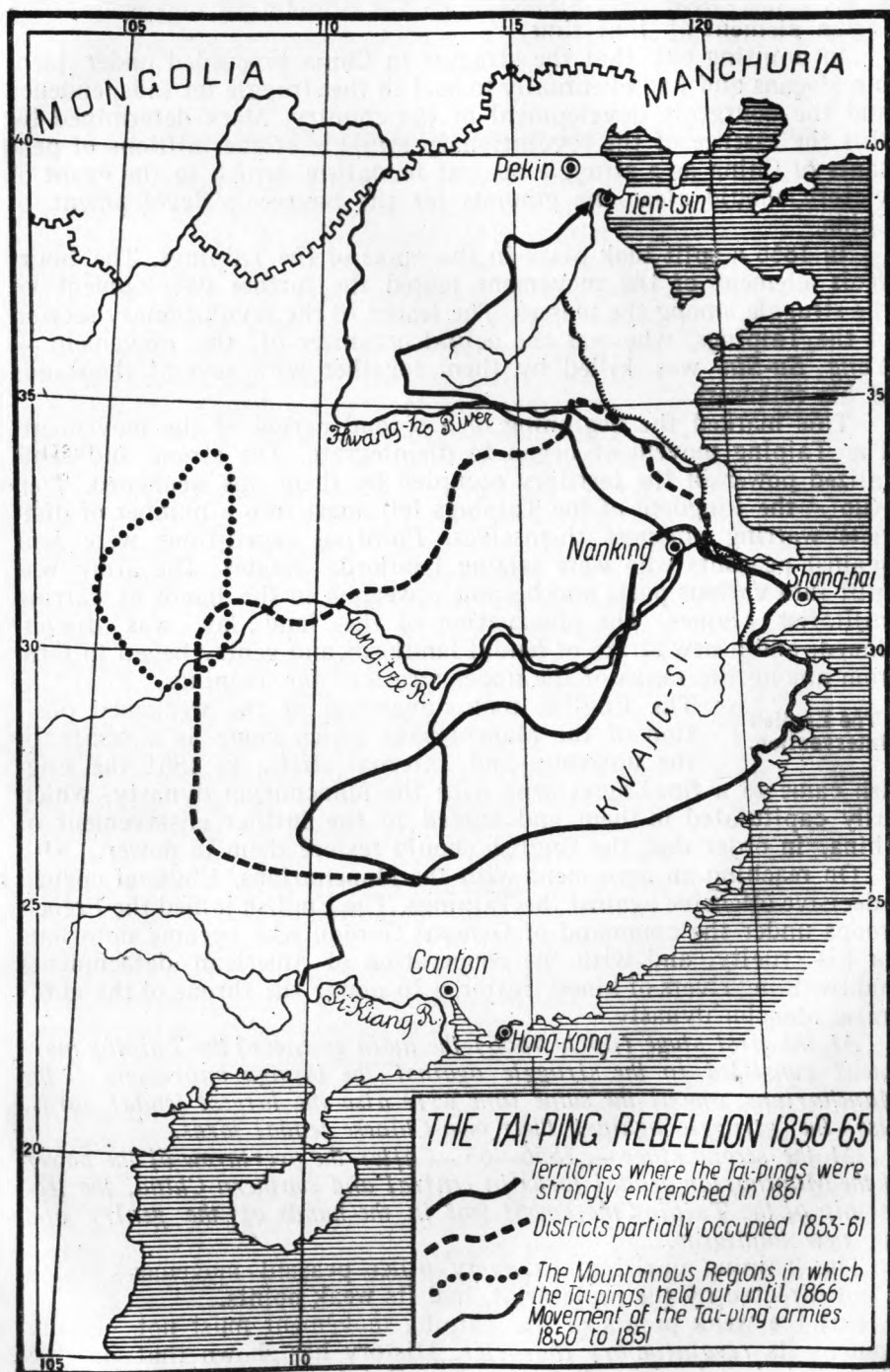
«All the fields of the Heavenly Empire to be cultivated by all the people of the Heavenly Empire.» (i. e. the right of every one to receive land). «If there is land, it is cultivated jointly; if there is food, it is eaten together; if there is drink, — it is drunk together; if there is money, it is spent jointly. Everywhere there must be equality and there should not be a single person who is hungry and cold».

«During the harvest the collectors who were in charge of the detachments, are to collect into the state treasury wheat, beans, peas, sweet potatoes, hemp, cotton, chickens, dogs, as well as money with the exception of that food which each one consumes... No person in the universe should hold on to anything which they do not need.» The Taipings confiscated land from the feudals and monasteries, abolished slavery, and recognized the equality of women. On the territory freed from the Manchurians the rebels established Taiping Tien Kuo<sup>1</sup>.

But the Taipings were not able to carry out any radical political changes. They established a new monarchy. The Taipings declared Siu-tsuan their emperor. In this way the peasants were not able to substitute the monarchy of the Chinese emperor with anything else but another monarchy.

**The Character of the Revolution.** In 1850 Marx pointed out that in China, «In the midst of the rebellious mob there were people who indicated the poverty of one section of the population and the wealth of the other, who demanded a different distribution of property, who demanded and are still demanding the full abolishment of private property». This demonstrates that the people's movement at that time had faint conceptions of communist

<sup>1</sup> Taiping Tien Kuo means — the great kingdom of heavenly repose.





ideas, ideas which were promoted by the proletarian and semi-proletarian element of that time.

In pointing out that the struggle in China proceeded under Jacobin slogans and had eventually to lead to the struggle for independence and the bourgeois development of the country, Marx determined by this the essence of the revolutionary struggle of the millions of peasants of China as a struggle against feudalism, which in the event of victory should clear the grounds for the bourgeois development of China.

In 1856 a split took place in the ranks of the Taipings. The bourgeois element of the movement feared the further development of the struggle among the masses. The leader of the revolutionary section of the Taipings, who was the actual organizer of the movement — *Yang Su-Sin* was killed by them together with several thousands of his followers.

This marked the beginning of a second period of the movement. The Taiping movement began to disintegrate. The strong and centralized power in the territory occupied by them was weakened. Tien Kuo — the kingdom of the Taipings fell apart into a number of districts warring amongst themselves. Punitive expeditions were sent against peasants who were seizing landlords' estates. The army was split into various parts and became a weapon in the hands of warring militarist cliques. The observation of the land law was discontinued, and a new strata of feudal landlords and gentry began to form from among the ranks of the upper strata of the Taipings.

**The English Intervention.** The English took advantage of the weakened position of the Manchurians which came as a result of the uprisings and internal strife. In 1861 the English came to a final agreement with the Manchurian dynasty, which fully capitulated to them and agreed to the further enslavement of China, in order that the English should restore them to power.

On reaching an agreement with the Manchurians, England opened a decisive offensive against the Taipings. The English joined the French troops under the command of General Gordon who became notorious for his cruelty, and with the cooperation of American detachments and shedding rivers of blood, restored to power the throne of the autocratic Manchu dynasty.

*At the first stage (up to 1856) the main essence of the Taiping movement consisted in the struggle against the foreign oppressors — the Manchurians, who at the same time were also the largest feudal lords, also the struggle against their own Chinese feudal lords.*

*At the second stage — 1856—65 — after the overthrow of the power of the Manchurian feudal lords in central and southern China, the leadership of the Taiping movement was in the hands of the gentry and the new landlords.*

The Taiping uprising, as every other peasant movement which is not directed by the proletariat, had its weak points.

But the weak points of the Taiping movement must not obscure from us its *revolutionary character*. History has shown that on the whole it is just in those districts where Taipings were victorious, and the land law enforced, that the revolutionary movement of 1911—



1912 and 1927—29 was the strongest, and it is just in these districts, excluding the cities near the coast and the points along the Yangtze occupied by the interventionists, that the Soviet power has entrenched itself in China.

### § 31. The first International up to the Paris Commune.

The International founded in 1864 was the *first International proletarian party*. This party could rise and rose only in a period of a definite level of development of capitalist society and the labour movement. Towards the sixties of the 19th century bourgeois society succeeded in creating powerful means of transportation and communication which embraced all countries of the world. It succeeded in creating a productive apparatus which covered not only the capitalist countries but also the economically backward countries. It created the world market not only for commodities, but also labour «power», in place of the old local and national seclusion and self sufficiency. It created «intercourse in every direction, universal interdependence of nations.» The bourgeoisie «just as it has subjected the country dependent on the towns, so it has made barbarian and semibarbarian countries dependent on the civilized ones, nations of peasants, on nations of bourgeoisie, the East on the West; in one word, it creates a world after its own image.» (Communist Manifesto). The bourgeoisie became the masters of the world.

The contradictions and class antagonism of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat under these conditions in place of having *exclusively* local national character reached the stage of *international character*. The international domination of the bourgeoisie was now confronted with the international class liberation strivings of the proletariat. The proletariat of the advanced capitalist countries became conscious of the common nature of its struggle against the bourgeoisie as an international struggle, it began to understand that its liberation is impossible without the class struggle against the bourgeoisie, and against the bourgeoisie of their own country first of all. The struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie of its country assumed national proportions. It became a struggle of the class of proletarians against the class of capitalists organized as a state power, i. e. a political struggle, a struggle for political power. Along this road the proletariat begins to understand the necessity of its own political party, independent from all other parties, a party which would direct and take upon itself the leadership of the entire struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeois yoke and exploitation. *The first attempts at the creation of such national proletarian parties were observed in all the advanced elements of the working class which began to feel a real live necessity for creating an organization through which it would be*



General Gordon.

possible, alongside and in connection with the struggle against its «own» national bourgeoisie, to establish connections, to generalize and to raise the struggle to the higher level of the struggle against the international domination of the bourgeoisie. On this basis arose the 1st International.

### **The Labour Movement in England.**

The mass labour movement temporarily acquired an almost exclusively economic character in the years of the economic development unprecedented in the history of England (1849—57).

In the first half of the fifties despite the economic «welfare», the workers of the textile industry and the machine construction workers had to carry on a stubborn strike struggle against the bosses for the preservation of their wage standards.

At the end of the fifties and particularly beginning with the crisis of 1857, which shook the entire economy of England and other countries, the strike struggle was joined by new detachments of the proletariat, — the workers of the needle industry and the building trades.

A particularly large strike was carried on by the building workers in 1859.

During this strike trade union committees for the purpose of assisting the strikers were formed in a number of British cities.

And in a number of cities out of these workers' committees were formed trade union councils which had a great significance because of the particularly scattered state of the trade unions of that period. Towards the end of the fifties over 1,600 trade union organizations existed in England. The workers of one and the same industry belonged to dozens of various trade unions; for example the firemen were united into one trade union, the engineers in another, and oilers in a third.

The London Council of Trade Unions formed in 1860 played a very great rôle in the history of the English labour movement. It succeeded in becoming a virtual center of the English trade union movement because it took upon itself the initiative of destroying those obstacles and hindrances which the English bourgeoisie were putting up to stop the path of development of the workers' organizations and of the labour movement of England. These obstacles were: the «master and servant» act which placed the worker in a disadvantageous position, the law against picketing during strikes which virtually annulled the right of workers to strike, the absence of laws protecting the funds of trade unions which simply legalized stealing, etc.—all these obstacles interfered with the development of trade union organizations and consequently with the development of the organized labour movement, even in the form of a strike.

The English bourgeoisie passed a number of laws which served as the main obstacles on the road of development of the labour movement in England. For this reason the London Council of Trade unions in taking the initiative towards eliminating these obstacles had to enter upon the path of political struggle, because this was the only way in which they could be eliminated. Marx, who lived in London and was connected with the leaders of the London Council, did everything in his power to make this question clear to them. His efforts were successful. In 1860 the London Council called a national conference of workers in London for the formation of a National League of Struggle for suffrage reform, entering, for this purpose, into an alliance with the Chartist group. In 1862 a Political Union of Trade Unions was created by the workers who set before themselves the same task, as that which had been advanced by the Chartists — to fight for the

introduction of universal suffrage rights for the entire male population of England. In this way, in the beginning of the sixties the organized workers of England, in the course of their struggle against the bourgeoisie, entered upon the path of the political struggle and even attempted to create an organization. This was an important step forward because prior to that time the workers' organisations of England (after the defeat of Chartism) evaded the political struggle and were wasting their energy in the attempts to organize mutual aid and co-operative societies.

But the English workers needed the support of the continental workers of Europe once they entered upon the path of political struggle for universal suffrage rights. They understood quite well that on initiating the struggle they would meet the resistance of the bourgeoisie which would attempt to break their organization by means of lock-outs and the importation of foreign workers.

This explains the striving of the English workers for the strengthening of the international ties, and hence their attempt to come to an agreement with German and French workers relative to mutual support and joint action. Marx exerted his entire influence in order to bring nearer, to hasten and strengthen organizationally these tendencies towards the establishment of international ties between the workers and to ensure their joint action.

Among the prominent leaders of the trade unions in that period we find the names of the shoemaker *Odger*, secretary of the London Trade Union Council, *Eccarius*, the leader of the Tailors' Union in London and also the German emigrant *Shaper* who jointly with Marx and Engels were members of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (the Communist League) in 1848.

The German Communist-emigrants (*Eccarius*, *Shaper*, etc.), who were on the one hand closely connected with the leaders of the English trade unions, and on the other hand with Marx, did everything possible in order to make clear to the English trade unions the significance of the international alliance of workers.

This group carried on a struggle against the narrow «craft» economism of the trade unions and put forward the task of the *political* struggle of the working class.

**The Working  
Class Move-  
ment in Ger-  
many.**

The European commercial-industrial crisis of 1857 and the political crisis of 1859 (Austrian-Italian war) and the political crisis in Germany in the beginning of the sixties gave the impetus to the development of the German labour movement. In 1862 a delegation of German workers visited the world exhibition in London and after returning organized a number of workers' meetings at which it reported on its trip and told at the same time about the life, organization and struggle of the English workers. At these meetings the slogan was put forward calling for an All-German Workers' Congress for the creation of a workers' organization in Germany on a national scale. A Central Committee was elected and entrusted with the calling of the Congress. It was stationed in Leipzig. This movement of workers for an independent organization was immediately combatted by the bourgeoisie and the Government. The bourgeoisie viciously attack-

ed the workers, condemning their aspiration for independence, striving to subordinate the developing movement to its influence. On the other hand Bismarck, through his agent Ickler, who worked his way into the workers' organization, attempted to seize the labour movement into his hands in order to have the possibility of holding the bourgeoisie in subordination, frightening it with the «red» danger. In the desire to attract the workers on the side of the Government, they promised to assist them in the strike struggle against the manufacturers. It was under these conditions that the Leipzig Central Committee appealed to the public opinion in Germany, asking it to express its attitude in relation to independent organization of the proletariat. Lassalle took advantage of the proposal to the Central Committee for agitation in favour of an Independent Workers' Party. As we have already seen this agitation of Lassalle led to the formation of the General Union of German Workers with Lassalle at the head. Lassalle while in words preaching the independence of workers' organizations and the independent struggle of the working class, in reality had no confidence in its forces and as we already know, he entered into a compromise with Bismarck, betraying the proletariat for a promise to introduce universal suffrage rights in Germany.

Marx carried on a decisive struggle against Lassalle and his tactics. When Lassalle visited Marx in 1862 in London, Marx openly declared that Lassalle is a Bonapartist, and for this reason politically he has nothing in common with Lassalle. Marx and Engels struggled for a really independent workers' organization, they explained to the German workers that the universal suffrage rights which Lassalle advocated under German Conditions with the reign of absolutism, without the freedom of assembly, press and union, would constitute not a victory for the workers, but a trap into which the junkers Government of Bismarck wanted to lure them. For this reason if the German proletariat really wanted to create an 'independent workers' party then it had to do it, and in that case it was obliged to carry on a struggle not only against the bourgeoisie but also against the landlords, with whom Lassalle wants to drag them into an agreement. This line of Marx and Engels was championed in Germany by Liebknecht who later established connections with Bebel. In opposition to the Lassallians, Liebknecht and Bebel subsequently created a really independent Socialist Party which received the name of Eisenachers (from the name of the city in which the first congress of that party took place). On that first Congress of Eisenachers—a programme of action was accepted which contained many points of Lassalle's programme. (The publication of the «free people's government», and the organization of industrial companies by the help of the government, and others). This programme showed the theoretical weakness of the Eisenachers. Notwithstanding the organization of this party in opposition to the party of Lassalle it played a great rôle in the working class movement of Germany. The Eisenachers struggling for the revolutionary democratic path for the unification of Germany, did not overlook the international problems facing the working class. When the 1 International was organized the Eisenachers unlike the Lassallists, joined it. They conducted the struggle of the workers along economic lines, giving

support to the strike movement of the proletariat, also organizing and strengthening the trade unions. The Eisenachers appeared to be that organization which laid «a practical foundation actually of a social-democratic workers' party» (*Lenin.*)

In this manner the German labour movement rose in the beginning of the sixties to a higher level. The workers entered upon the path of complete freedom from the influence of the bourgeoisie and took active measures for the organization of their own Party. Here also, as in England, Marx strove to link up the developing labour movement in Germany with the workers' movement of other countries, to establish and strengthen their common international unity.

#### The Labour Movement in France.

In France the labour movement was developing in petty bourgeois surroundings under the environment in which petty industry and craftsmanship still played a great rôle and for this reason the petty bourgeois teaching of *Proudhon* enjoyed considerable influence there.

*Proudhon* (1809—1865) was the son of a poor-peasant who worked together with his wife in a brewery.

Proudhon himself, first began to work as a proof-reader in a printshop and later opened his own small printshop.

In 1840 Proudhon published a pamphlet «What is Property» in which he declared that «property — is robbery». However Proudhon considered that not all property was robbery. He considered robbery, large property (factories, plants, large landholdings) where hired workers are exploited. In demanding the destruction of large property Proudhon at the same time was an ardent advocate of small property. He saw the salvation from social evils in the preservation and the strengthening of the petty property of the peasantry and artisans.



Proudhon.

Proudhon proposed to destroy money and to organize barter between small owner-producers, without the participation of the middlemen, through the medium of the co-operative national banks. Proudhon did not want to destroy the basis of capitalism — commodity production, he only wanted to *purge* this basis from «abuses», etc.

He wanted to find the way out of the contradictions of capitalist society in the creation and strengthening of small production, and the elimination of trade by the organization of barter through a national bank. Proudhon had a negative attitude towards the class struggle of the proletariat, condemned even the strike movement and denied the necessity of the political struggle of the working class.

Proudhon viewed as an evil the bourgeois State inasmuch as it defended the interests of the bourgeoisie, bankers, speculators and usurers.

The proletarian State in his opinion was superfluous inasmuch as he placed all of his hope not in the revolution but in the co-operative banks.

The programme of Proudhon was reactionary utopian. The confusion in theory and the constant waverings in political sentiment were

characteristic of the entire life of Proudhon as the ideologist of the wavering petty bourgeoisie. To a certain extent Proudhonism was the theory of the adaptation of the labour movement of France to the conditions which were created following the Bonapartist coup d'état and the establishment of the Second Empire. It was not without cause that Marx claimed that the future generations in studying the epoch of the Second Empire would show Proudhon as the interpreter of the needs of that epoch.

It must be stated, however, that in France also, although in a more retarded form than in Germany the process of the liberation of the proletariat from the influence of the petty bourgeois and bourgeois ideologists was going on. This was facilitated by a heavy economic political yoke which was pressing upon the proletariat in the epoch of the Second Empire. This was also facilitated by the crisis of 1857 and the Franco-Italian-Austrian war of 1859, which intensified the sufferings of the proletariat and pushed it along the path of struggle against the existing political and social economic conditions. The working class of France began to stir. First of all it attempted to break down those obstacles which stood in the path of its strike struggle. In the epoch of the Second Empire all alliances and unions of workers were prohibited in France and participation in strikes was punished with trial and jail imprisonment. The working class came out first of all against these barriers. The strike of the typographical workers in Paris in 1862 played a great rôle in this respect. All of the typographical workers of Paris took part in this strike. The police attacked the strikers and made a number of arrests. The bourgeoisie which was dissatisfied with the unsuccessful attempts of the Bonapartist Government to reduce the effects of the commercial-industrial crisis, with its last measures in the sphere of commercial policy, and in particular the commercial agreement concluded with England, which was detrimental to French industry, decided to utilize the workers' movement directing it against Bonaparte. It came out in defence of the strikers. The bourgeois papers attacked Bonaparte's Government and demanded that the persecution of the strikers be stopped. Bonaparte in sensing the manoeuvres of the bourgeoisie, decided to out-do it. He decided to come out himself in the rôle of the benefactor of the workers and against the bourgeoisie and even against his own police. He ordered that the arrested workers be immediately set free and later on when they were put on trial and condemned he pardoned them.

Simultaneously with this the agents of Bonaparte headed by Prince Napoléon intensified their agitation among the workers convincing them that the Emperor was the best defender of the working class. In this rivalry between the bourgeoisie and Bonaparte for influence over the proletariat, the workers of France put forward the slogan: «Neither the bourgeoisie, nor Bonaparte but for an independent separate labour movement.» The reflection of this sentiment of the working masses was the manifesto issued in 1864, which was signed by 60 workers, the so-called «Manifesto of the Sixty» which asserted the political maturity of the proletariat stating that the proletariat does not need a guardian, and the demand for the democratic elections was put forward and the necessity of putting

out independent candidates from the ranks of the workers themselves in the Parliamentary elections was proclaimed. It is true that this Manifesto still strongly savoured of Proudhonism, but its basic thought consisted in emphasizing the necessity of the independent labour movement, the necessity of participating in the political struggle which demonstrated that the working class movement of France was coming to the correct road which had to lead it towards the organization of its own Party.

Alongside with this the representatives of the French workers established connections with the English workers and carried on negotiations with them about the establishment of constant connections for the exchange of experience and mutual aid in the struggle against the bourgeoisie.

**The International Connections of the Proletariat.**

At the end of the fifties and in the beginning of the sixties the connections of workers of various countries grew stronger. For the extension of their international connections workers were utilizing various pretexts. The international exhibition of 1862 in London

to which came delegates from the continental workers served as one of these pretexts. During the exhibition an official comradesly gathering of workers of various nationalities took place, personal contacts were established between them and the thought ripened about the repetition of similar meetings and the organization of more stable and regular connections. The reason for the new meeting was the bloody suppression of the uprising of the Polish revolutionists, in 1863 by the Russian autocracy.

In July 1863 a meeting of protest took place in London against the brutal persecution of Polish revolutionists by the tsarist government. This meeting was attended by workers who came from France — most of them were Proudhonists.

At this meeting the English workers decided to send an address to the French workers. The address stated: «As a means of putting an end to the present abuse of force we call upon all for the creation of the brotherhood of people. Let us call a conference from the representatives of England, France, Germany, Italy, Poland and all those countries where there is a will to work in common for the favour of humanity. Let us call our congresses for the discussion of the great questions upon which the peace of nations depends».

This address which put forward a hazy slogan about «work in favour of humanity» stated that during the strikes the bosses of England bring workers from European countries and that it is necessary to put an end to this by joint action of workers of all countries.

The workers' committees of international solidarity which were formed in England and France facilitated the strengthening of ties between workers of these countries.

**The Meeting of September 28th 1864 and the Organization of the International.**

In the following year on the 28th of September 1864 an answer by French workers to the address was read by engraver *Tolain* at a big international meeting. The answer to the address stated that the workers must put an end to wars of plunder and oppression of the weak nations by the strong, that «capital is

being concentrated and organized into powerful financial and indus-



rial enterprises», that «the absence of solidarity between workers creates an industrial slavery more relentless and threatening than serfdom.»

The organizers of the meeting asked Marx to come out in the name of the German workers. On his proposal, the meeting was addressed by his old co-fighter in the Communist League — the worker Eccarius with whom Marx worked out the basic points of his speech before the meeting.

After the address a decision was reached to organize a permanent international workers' organization and a committee was elected to draw up the Constitution.

The Committee which on October 5th adopted the name of the General Council was composed of prominent representatives of the English labour movement — *Odger, Cremer* and others, among whom were many of the old Chartists and followers of Owen, the representatives of French workers, the representatives of German workers — Marx and Eccarius and delegates from the Italian, Swiss and Polish workers, — altogether 50 people.

**«The Inaugural Address» of the International.** In this way the first step in the creation of the first international proletarian Party was made. Now the second step had to be made, the most difficult and important,—to draw up the programme of the party.

The difficulty of this step consisted in the fact that in the International were united the workers of various countries who stood on various levels of development of class consciousness. Alongside with the German worker communists, — the followers of Marx — it was composed of the English trade unionists, the French Proudhonists, the English Owenites etc. The programme of the International had to be a *proletarian programme*, but at the same time it had to be sufficiently broad so that it would not repulse a single group of workers who adhered to various points of view. Marx, who, as we have seen, exerted much time and energy to raise the labour movement to a level on which the formation of the International became possible, was confronted with a difficult task. But not in vain was Marx the recognized leader of the proletariat. He could work splendidly in the ranks of the most backward masses without sacrificing the principles of a revolutionary Communist. He solved the task which confronted him in a splendid manner. He embodied in the «Inaugural address» and in the Constitution of the International all the basic ideas of the «Communist Manifesto» in such a form that they were clear even for the most backward workers and acceptable for the trade unionists, and for the Proudhonists, etc.

In the «Inaugural address» Marx proved in a simple way which could be understood even by less developed workers that the growth of social riches, the successes of industry, the perfection of machinery, the development of transport under the conditions of capitalism do not in any way improve the condition of the working class. From 1848 to 1864 the rich became richer and the poor became still poorer. The condition of the working class under capitalism did not improve but was growing worse. The working class was suppressed politically. The absence of common action of the working class in the revolution of

1848 led to its defeat. In this way the working class was oppressed economically and politically under capitalism. Where then was the way out of this situation? The way out was shown by proletarian theory, by proletarian science. Look, — stated Marx, — how bourgeois science frothing at the mouth is proving that the legislative limitation of the working day to 10 hours would destroy English industry. Proletarian theory proved the contrary. Now this law has been carried out. Its advantages have been recognised even by the officials of the bourgeoisie. Look further, — at the co-operatives. They have shown in practice the conclusions of the proletarian theory that «the production on a large scale and in full agreement with the demand of contemporary science can proceed also without the existence of the class of masters who exploit the working class.» It has shown in practice that the production of social riches does not at all demand private property in the means and implements of production, that hired labour must be replaced by labour in socialized production. But does it mean that the salvation of the workers lies in co-operatives, in the creation of cooperative shops under capitalism? No — answers Marx. The experience of the productive workers' co-operatives from 1848 to 1864 has proven that under capitalism the cooperative has no power either to destroy private property, to free workers, nor to seriously relieve their position. In order to free the workers co-operative production must be extended to the entire country and be supported by all the forces and resources of the State. And, if this is the case, then it is clear to every worker that the State of the landlords and the capitalists not only will not render any support to the co-operatives, but will strangle them, will not permit them to be extended to the entire social production. Therefore, the workers have only one way out of the position of slavery—to capture political power. And the workers already began to understand that the way out lies in this, because they have already entered upon the path of the creation of their own political Party. In order to be successful these Parties must ally into one Union and pursue one aim. If the workers do not achieve this unity of organization and aim, then for their division they will be punished by a general defeat as was the case in 1848.

In conclusion «The Inaugural Address» proclaimed peace as the principle of the international policy of the proletariat, and workers were called to active struggle against the policy of plundering wars.

In the «Inaugural Address» Marx called upon workers of all countries to rally for the capture of political power, for the construction of Socialism.

**The Statutes  
and Programme  
of the International.**

Simultaneously with the «Inaugural Address» Marx drew up temporary statutes of the International, the introductory part of which gave the basis of the programme of the International in a brief, condensed form, repeating the same principles which were expressed

in the address. The programme section put forward as the basic proposition that «the liberation of the workers must be the task of the workers themselves», that workers are striving not for the creation of new privileges but for destruction of every class domination. It was pointed out that the economic subordination of the worker to the

owner of the means of production constitutes the basic reason for the enslavement of the workers, for social poverty, mental degradation and political dependence.

*For this reason the economic liberation of the working class was declared to be the great aim. The political movement was declared the means for the economic liberation of the workers.* Further, it was pointed out that «all aspirations for the achievement of this great aim remain so far unsuccessful due to the lack of solidarity between workers of various professions in each country and due to the lack of fraternal union between workers of various countries»... «That the liberation of workers constitutes not a local, or national task, but a social one, embracing all countries in which modern society exists». In view of this «the undersigned members of the Committee elected by the conference which took place on the 28th of September 1864 in Saint Martin Hall in London adapted the necessary measures for the foundation of the *Workingmen's international association*.

This programme was the first Marxian programme of the International Workers' Party and became a foundation for all further programmes of the revolutionary Marxian parties.

Both documents, prepared by Marx, were adopted unanimously by the General Council. No one could argue against the indisputable ideas.

The difficulties which Marx had to encounter in drawing up the address to the working class in the programme section of the Statutes, are characteristic for the general situation in the International.

The condition of affairs in the First International differed greatly with what we have at the present time in the Communist International.

At the present time in all the largest countries there are strong mass Communist Parties. Now the Communist International demands from a Party entering it, the acceptance of 21 conditions, among which is included the full recognition of all points of the programme of the Communist International which have been worked out in detail.

This could not be done during the formation of the First International. In view of the insufficient maturity and insufficient political formation of the workers' movement, the International accepted not only the political Parties but also trade unions, workers' educational and propagandist organizations and even individuals who declared their agreement with the basic ideas of the International.

*These heterogeneous organizations united along the principle, which constitutes now the basis of organization of the parties of the communist International—the principle of democratic centralism.* In accordance with the Statutes of the International, it was headed by the General Council (the overwhelming majority of members of the General Council were workers) which was located in London. As a rule the organizations of each country connected with the International had to unite into a single section. The General Council had the right, in the periods between Congresses, to come in direct contact with any organization and with any member of the International, and at the Basel Congress in 1869, the General Council was authorised to accept and expel organizations and individual members.

The International was confronted with the historic task of drawing into its ranks the broad masses of workers, organizing them and educating them. These masses were at various stages of development of class consciousness. The brains of some of them were clogged with Proudhonism, Owenism, etc. *It was necessary to prove the uselessness of all these theories of petty bourgeois and sectarian socialism in the practice of the direct organization of the workers and of their daily struggle.* It was necessary, while organizing the workers for strikes, and leading the strikes, to prove to them in practice the uselessness of the Proudhonist leadership which denied the necessity of the strike struggle. It was necessary, in organizing the English workers for struggle for universal suffrage rights and exposing at the same time the treacherous role of the bourgeois Radicals, to show them in practice, by this very fact, the uselessness of the trade union leaders, who dragged at the tail end of these Radicals. In a word, it was necessary, to show in the daily experience of the labour movement, on the basis of the daily struggle of the workers, all the uselessness of pre-Marxian Socialism, the necessity of the class struggle of the proletariat, the necessity of a political Party, leading this struggle, the realism of Marxism as the only correct theory of the proletarian movement. It is not surprising, therefore, that Marx strove to fill in the agenda of the first congresses of the International with questions which were directly related to the daily experience of the masses, leaving more complex programme and theoretical questions until the time when the masses would accumulate sufficient experience for their understanding.

**The Geneva Congress of the International.**

Marx was not present at the first Congress of the International which was held in 1866 but he participated in its work, and worked out the agenda of the congress, the most important reports

and resolutions.

He purposely did not include in the agenda such basic questions of programme as the questions of property. The agenda consisted exclusively of those questions which were of practical interest to the widest strata of workers and which at the same time constituted the basic points of disagreement with Proudhonists. These were the questions of strikes, legislative measures for the limitation of the working day, on female and child labour, etc. After the adoption at the Congress of the temporary constitution worked out by Marx in 1864, the struggle with the Proudhonists began on all the remaining questions on the agenda.

The Proudhonists, true to their teacher, came out against strikes, against the organization of trade unions, against the 8-hour working day and against the labour of women in industry, declaring that the duty of a woman is to the family first and that her calling is the family.

The adherents of Marx who were in the majority in the General Council, had the leadership of the entire Congress and scored a new victory over the Proudhonists.

The resolutions of the Proudhonists were rejected and the Congress adopted the resolutions drawn up for it by Marx.

The resolutions on trade unions expressed the necessity of drawing the trade unions into a political struggle and of drawing into the trade

unions the lowest paid strata of the workers, including the agricultural labourers.

The Congress adopted a decision demanding the introduction of a law on the 8 hour working day, recognized the right of women and children to productive labour, put forth the demand for the extended organization of labour protection. The note of the General Council advanced the projects of a labour school, the participation of children in the production process and in polytechnical education.

The importance of demands for the passing of laws on labour questions was particularly emphasized. In contrast to the trade unionists who did not understand the importance of the class political struggle, the report of the Congress pointed out that the trade unions must render assistance to every social and political movement which has for its aim the full liberation of the proletariat from capitalist slavery.

The Congress also demanded the disbanding of the standing army and its replacement by an armed population.

«I feared very much for the first Congress in Geneva,» — wrote Marx to Kugelman after the Congress, — «contrary to my expectation it was on the whole successful. Its influence in France, England and America is entirely unexpected.»

The decisions of the Geneva Congress dealt a decisive blow to the Proudhonists from which they could not long recover. The International on the whole rejected their views, in spite of their desperate, resistance and the large numerical representation at the Congress. «Ignorant, conceited, pretentious, gossipy, full of false pathos», — Marx wrote about them, — «they almost spoiled everything, coming to the Congress in such large numbers which in no way corresponded to the number of their members». But while expecting victory they suffered a full defeat. The International appealed over their heads directly to the working masses. And the masses responded to this appeal. They began to carry into life the decisions of the International, organizing strikes, organizing the trade unions, rallying around the International.

#### **The National Reform League in England.**

In the same year the International led the mass movement of the English workers for the extension of the suffrage rights. Already in 1862—1863 the London Council of Trade Unions developed agitation in the capital and in the provinces, under the influence of Marx and his adherents, for the reform of the suffrage law and for independent participation of the workers in the Parliamentary elections.

Shortly after the foundation of the International the General Council took upon itself the leadership of the struggle for the reform of the suffrage rights. More than half of the members of the the Committee of the newly formed workers' mass organization «The National Reform League» consisted of the members of the General Council. Under the leadership of the International, the movement assumed a mass character. The Conference of the «National Reform League» which was held in February 1866 was attended by 200 delegates from all parts of England and even from Ireland. The League organized a number of gigantic meetings. At one of the meetings in Hyde Park in London over 60,000 workers attended and an encounter with the police took place.

The Government was compelled to grant concessions and in 1867 a law was passed which extended the suffrage rights considerably. According to the new law the suffrage rights were given not only to those who had property but also to all those who rented apartments and rooms.

The struggle for suffrage reform strengthened the influence of the International in the English labour movement and facilitated the political education of the workers.

**The International and the Strike Movement.**

The influence of the International also grew considerably in other countries in the course of the year which separated the Geneva Congress from the subsequent Congress which was held in Lausanne. In 1866

Europe experienced a bad crisis. Wages were lowered everywhere, workers were laid off and factories were closing down completely. At the same time the cost of living greatly increased in connection with a crop failure of that year.

The International led a number of strikes: in London the defensive strike of sieve makers against the lowering of wages, the strike of tailors who were out for seven months and won the strike, the basket-makers, etc. In Paris the International led an impressive strike of bronze workers, who, as a result of this strike, gained the annulment of the prohibition of trade unions. In addition to that the International led a number of strikes in Switzerland and in other countries, including strikes throughout England.

In the Spring of 1866 a big strike of sieve makers took place in London. In order to smash the strike the bosses decided to import workers from France. On learning of this the International notified its sections in France and the plans of the bosses failed.

In the subsequent years of 1867—1868 the influence of the International in the labour movement grew still further.

In the spring of 1868, during the strike of building workers in Geneva, the local section of the International came out against the bosses in the name of the workers of Geneva. The bosses refused to carry on negotiations. Following this an advertisement was pasted on the walls of the city announcing that on the same day at 8 o'clock a meeting of all sections of the International would be called at the sound of a drum.

The bosses were greatly impressed when 5,000 members of the Geneva Section of the International moved from all parts of the city towards the centre to the sound of the drum. And when the bosses learnt that the news of the strike had been conveyed to London, Paris, Lyons and Brussels and that the General Council had promised to give at least 40,000 francs for the support of the strikers, and that Paris had already remitted about 10,000 francs, then the bosses retreated after a brief resistance. The working day was shortened 1—2 hours and the wages increased 10%.

During the same year bloody events took place in Belgium.

When the Government shot down hungry striking miners in Charlefoi, the International issued an appeal among the English miners and railwaymen for the collection of money, for the families of the murdered miners. The General Council collected a large amount of money which was sent to Belgium.

After the second shooting of workers in the coal mines of Charleroi the General Council declared the cause of the Charleroi miners a common cause of the International and was able to quickly send to Belgium considerable financial support.

In response to this the International was joined by a considerable number of Belgian workers and the Belgian section of the Interna-

tional was formed. Belgium sent 55 delegates to the Brussels Congress held in 1868.

The facts cited here are sufficient to show what a great practical revolutionary work was carried out by the International.

*In carrying on the practical and mass work, the General Council was at the same time conducting, under the leadership of Marx, an irreconcilable struggle against opportunism in the questions of programme and tactics.*

**The Appearance of the First Volume of "Capital" in 1867.**

While an emigrant in London, living under the most difficult material conditions, frequently on the verge of real poverty and starvation, Marx was successful in drawing up all the basic documents of the International and reports to the Congresses. Considerable part of the great correspondence of the International belongs to the pen of Marx.

During the same period Marx created, after a series of preliminary economic and historic researches, the greatest scientific production — «Capital», — the first volume of which came out in 1867.

In «Capital» Marx reveals the laws of development and decline of the capitalist society and shows that «when the workers have been already transformed into proletarians, and the conditions of their labour into capital... (then)... expropriation must be applied already not to the worker who carries on an independent economy, but the capitalist who exploits many workers.»

«Since capitalists and workers exist in this world there was never before a book,» — wrote Engels about «Capital,» — «which has such a significance for workers.»

The Lausanne Congress of the International (1867) adopted a special resolution in which it recommended Marx's «Capital» to all workers as the best production, a work illuminating and pointing the way for a real labour movement.

**The Lausanne and Brussels Congresses.**

The Proudhonists made the last unsuccessful attempts to gain the leadership of the labour movement at the two subsequent congresses (after Geneva) — Lausanne (1867) and Brussels (1868). But the masses did not listen to them any longer. At these congresses the Proudhonists suffered the last defeat. A resolution was passed by the Lausanne Congress to the effect that the social liberation of the workers cannot be separated from their political liberation, and the Brussels Congress passed an important decision on the necessity of struggling for the abolition of private ownership of the mines and railways and for the nationalization of lands.

The International decided that «the demands of production and the application of certain laws of agronomy necessitate the transition to *large scale agriculture* and make imperative the application of machines and *collective organization of labour in agriculture*».

At the same time it was pointed out that «the economic development of contemporary society creates the social necessity for *the transference of land into common property and the renting of this land by the State to the agricultural co-operatives (productive co-operatives)*».

These resolutions dealt a decisive blow to the Proudhonists who defended small property ownership and rebelled against the socialization of the implements and means of production.

The Proudhonists were defeated, but already in Basle at the Second Congress in 1869 a new opportunist opposition — the Bakuninists came out against the Marxian majority at the Congress.



**The Basle Congress.**

The Basle Congress was attended not by the representatives of four countries as was the case at the First Congress, but by the representatives of nine countries. England, France, Germany and Switzerland were joined by America where the National Labour Union was formed in 1868 and by Belgium, Austria, Italy and Spain.

On the first question—the question of property — the Congress confirmed the resolution of the previous Congress on the expropriation of the means of production from the bourgeois classes.

On the second basic question of the Congress—the right of inheritance — the General Council had to combat the opposition of the Bakuninists who were led at the Congress by Bakunin.

*Michael Bakunin* (1819—1876) a Russian nobleman, in his youth was an artillery officer. Later he resigned from the service and in 1833 settled in Moscow.

In 1840 Bakunin went to Europe and became acquainted with *Weitting* in Switzerland and in Paris with *Proudhon* and *Marx*.

During this period Bakunin came out at meetings and in the press in defence of Poland. During the 1848 revolution he was in France and Germany. While in Dresden in 1849 he took part in an uprising for which he was arrested and sentenced to be hung by the Saxon court. The execution was commuted to life imprisonment. Bakunin spent about three years in horrible prisons, chained to the wall, and then he was turned over to the Russian Government.

After six years of imprisonment in the Petropavlovsk fortress he was exiled to Siberia from where he fled in 1861 through Japan to America and later to London.

While imprisoned in the fortress in Russia, Bakunin drew up «a confession» addressed to Nicholas the First in which he expressed his repentance and he also wrote a penitent letter to Alexander the Second begging for mercy (these facts were not known in Europe). Up to 1864 Bakunin recognized the political struggle and even dreamt of the creation of a large State of Slavic people with Russia at the head.

In 1864—1867 Bakunin became an anarchist.

In 1864 Bakunin met Marx in London and on receiving from him the Statutes he went to Italy for the purpose of forming there a section of the International. Instead of that, Bakunin organized his secret revolutionary alliance there and did not want to know anything about the International until 1867. He recalled it only after the bourgeois «League of Peace and Freedom» in which he was a member of the Central Committee, suffered complete bankruptcy. After that Bakunin joined the International. The General Council of the First International demanded that Bakunin dissolve his «Alliance» and he promised to do so, but in reality he preserved it, in order to fight the International.

It was characteristic for the theoretical views of Bakunin that he also was an adherent of small property ownership. He stood for the productive co-operatives — the communes, in the villages, and the unification of workers into «associations» in the city. He idealized the village commune, and the city co-operative, and in them he saw the nucleus for the future anarchist society.

In contrast to Lassalle, Bakunin did not expect any assistance from the State. In general he considered that not bourgeois property but the State is the source of all evil and demanded that on the day of the revolution the State be destroyed and that the country in which the revolution is victorious should be immediately transformed into city and agricultural communes without the State.

The Bakuninists eulogized spontaneity and were opponents of the consciousness and planned organization which is necessary for the proletariat in the struggle against the bourgeoisie.

«The Bakuninists» stated Engels, «preached for many years, that every revolutionary action from the top is harmful, that every-

*thing must be organized and carried out from the bottom to the top.»* In this way Bakunin and his followers were the adherents of the anarchists principle.

Bakunin fought against Communism. «I am a collectivist,» he declared, «because I demand the economic and social equalization of classes and recognize collective property. I hate Communism because it constitutes the negation of freedom, and without freedom it is impossible for the human personality to develop. I am not a Communist because Communism concentrates and swallows up all the forces of society in the State... while I desire the full destruction of the State».

On this basis Bakunin denied the necessity of the proletarian dictatorship. He did not demand the destruction of classes considering that the classes can remain, but that they must be «equalized», and, that for this reason, it is necessary to annul the right of inheritance.

The incorrect and confused theory of Bakunin was not applied in practice even by himself.

When in 1870 Bakunin together with the rebelling population of Lyons overthrew the old power, he immediately began the formation of a new government, instead of destroying the old power.

«In a theoretical respect Bakunin is zero» that was Engel's estimation of him as theoretician.

While a poor theoretician, Bakunin was an energetic organizer. His name enjoyed popularity in Italy, Switzerland, Spain and in Russia where he had a considerable number of adherents.

**Proudhonism and Bakuninism.** Bakunin had one common view with Proudhon which consisted in the negation of the State and of political struggle. Both of them were anarchists and denied the necessity of a class proletarian Party. In other points Bakunin and Proudhon had essential differences.

Proudhon was for small property ownership — Bakunin considered himself a collectivist. He advocated the organization of socialized economies in the village and the productive associations in the city. But at the same time Bakunin was opposed to centralized planned socialist economy.

Proudhon was the adherent of the peaceful way to the future society, through co-operatives, Bakunin stood for the revolution.

Proudhon was opposed to strikes — Bakunin was their adherent.

The differences between Bakunin and Proudhon in a number of the most important questions was not accidental. It was due to the fact that Proudhon and Bakunin represented different social strata.

*Proudhon represented the small property owners of France and Switzerland. The social basis of Bakuninism was entirely different. Bakunin found fertile ground in those countries (in Russia, in Italy, in Spain and also partially in Switzerland) which in the sixties were drawn into a rapid capitalist development and where in contrast to England the peasantry was not driven off the land but was going through a prolonged painful process of pauperization, where independent artisans were being bankrupted by large capital. The bankrupt peasantry and artisans — such is the social base of Bakuninism.*

Bakunin considered as the main force of the revolution, the bankrupt peasantry and those peasants who came to the factory, but who

were not as yet assimilated in the workers' melting pot. The bankrupt peasant, the pauper, the new, still unassimilated, cadres of workers, the army of the unemployed and the lumpen elements — such was the main force of the revolution in the opinion of Bakunin.

Bakunin was not connected with the shop-factory proletariat which is capable of organization and systematic struggle. He even viewed the proletariat with contempt. He could not understand its aims, its stubborn striving for organization and class political struggle. Bakunin saw in this «bourgeois corruption» and assumed that it is possible to put an end to the old with one precise and decisive blow; «the people are ready for revolt,» stated Bakunin. It is sufficient to throw a match and the fire of uprising will flare up.

**The Results of  
the Basle  
Congress.**

At the Basle Congress the Bakuninists initiated an attack against the General Council putting forth the question of the right of inheritance. Just as they assumed that if the State is «abolished» it will mean the disappearance of capital, so they also assumed that the abolition of the right of inheritance will lead to the disappearance of the bourgeoisie and of the private ownership of the implements and means of production.

Against this point of view, the General Council put forth the proposition that «the laws of inheritance are not reasons but the judicial consequences of the existing organization of society.»

It is understood that without a revolution, without the class struggle, without the deepest social changes capital cannot be destroyed by the mere passing of laws within the framework of bourgeois society.

The Bakuninists succeeded in securing the majority of votes in the commission on this question and they proposed their resolution which demanded the abolition of the right to inheritance as «one of the main obstacles towards the transference of land into common possession». Although the resolution of the Bakuninists was not passed by the Congress inasmuch as it did not receive the required number of votes, nevertheless it received more votes than the resolution of the General Council drawn up on the basis of a report, written by Marx. At the same Congress the Bakuninists proposed to extend the authority of the General Council giving it the right to expel from the International, separate sections, federations and persons, granting the latter the right of appealing against this expulsion at the next Congress of the International. These proposals were accepted. They were introduced by the Bakuninists in the hope that at the Basle Congress they would succeed in seizing the General Council into their hands. These expectations failed. They were not successful in winning the International from within by capturing the General Council. Then they initiated an open offensive against the General Council and Marx. Along this path they also suffered a defeat.

**The Results of  
the Activity of  
the First International toward  
18:0.**

*«In uniting the labour movement of all countries», wrote Lenin about the basic tasks which Marx pursued in the International, «In striving to direct into the channel of common activity various forms of non-proletarian, pre-marxian socialism, fighting against the theories of all these sects and schools, Marx forged the single*

*tactic of the proletarian struggle of the working class in various countries.»*

The great importance of the results achieved by the International in this period can be shown on the example of, for instance, the labour movement of France. The systematic clarification of the harmful, opportunist theories and practical proposals of Proudhonists, the blows received by the Proudhonists at the congresses of 1866, 1867 and 1868 and also the successful leadership of strikes by the International, which were not recognized by the Proudhonists, and the organization of the French workers for struggle finally undermined the authority of Proudhon's teaching. Among a great section of the French workers, the adherents of Proudhon, a turn took place towards the end of the sixties in the direction of rejecting the basic tenets of Proudhonism, a turn towards the point of view of class struggle and participation in the political struggle.

This circumstance played a great rôle in the period of the Paris Commune, «which was the involuntary spiritual child of the International», i. e., prepared by its entire preceding work.

It is also necessary to point out the organisational strengthening of the International during the first period: — the inclusion of a number of new countries, among them of America, the increasing number of members in sections, the strengthening of the International itself which was expressed in giving broad authorities to the General Council and in the establishment of a systematic direction of the work of various sections of the International.

**The Beginning  
of the Prussian  
War in 1870—  
1871 and the  
International.**

When in 1870 the war between France and Germany began the International experienced a very difficult period. The International did everything in its power to interfere with the war, mobilizing the workers for resistance against the ruling classes.

«*French, German and Spanish workers,*» wrote the French section of the International in its appeal, «*let us unite our voice into one great cry of indignation against the war.*»

«German brothers, do not listen to the prostituted voices of bourgeois servants who are attempting to deceive you... The war between us would be a fratricidal war», wrote the French workers.

— «We know,» — responded the German proletarians, «that on both sides of the Rhine are living our brothers with whom we are ready to die in the name of our final aim — the social revolution.»

However, the war started. This war conspired by the Governments of France and Germany was transformed into a civil war, when in the heart of France, in Paris, arose the Commune which in the words of Engels — was the child of the International, under the leadership of Marx, in the education and the organization of the French proletariat. Without the International the Commune would not have been that which it became, — the first form of the dictatorship of the proletariat in history.

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## CHAPTER VIII

### THE PARIS COMMUNE.

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#### § 32. France in the Epoch of the Second Empire.

##### The economic Rise in the Epoch of the Second Empire.

The first years of the Second Empire were years of economic rise. The development of capitalism in France made great strides in the fifties. It is sufficient to state that during the period from 1851 to 1869 the wealth of the country doubled and the commercial turnover grew by more than five times. Simultaneously the output of coal and the production of cast iron greatly increased. While in 1852 the output of coal was only 4,900,000 tons, in 1872 the output of coal was 16,100,000 tons, while the production of cast iron which in the fifties averaged 780,000 tons a year in the sixties rose to 1,140,000 tons.

While in 1850 France had 5,000 steam-engines, in 1869 there were already 29,000 and the net of railway lines increased during this time sixfold, (from 3,110 kilometres in 1850 to 17,900 kilometres in 1870).

##### The Character of French Industry.

In contrast to England where towards the sixties large machine production had almost destroyed artisanship and small industry; in France the small hand production survived alongside large industry. While, for example in the most advanced textile region, in the centre of the cotton textile industry — in Alsace and Vosges in 1867 there were 38,000 mechanical spinning machines and only 9,000 hand-loom, while in 1873, in the ancient centre of the silk industry — Lyons — alongside with 6,000 mechanical looms there were 110,000—120,000 hand-loom.

In such a large centre as Paris, small production decisively predominated. «Two-thirds of the industry of the capital consisted of dwarfish enterprises. Small enterprises constituted about a third and only a small percentage of medium and large enterprises existed.» On the average there were 4 workers per enterprise, and 61% of the bosses had only one worker.

However, there were also large enterprises in Paris. Out of 440,000 Parisian industrial workers, 50,000 were occupied in the municipal enterprises and large companies.

Towards the time of the Paris Commune the capital of France had 10 gas factories, a railway centre (12 depots), tobacco factory, printshops, dock-yards and other municipal and large private enterprises.

##### The Bourgeoisie.

Because of the extent of small production in France—small enterprises with one or two workers, artisanship, handicraftsmanship, and, in the agricultural economy, small peasant economy, — here alongside with the industrial bourgeoisie which exploited hired workers survived a considerable stratum of the bourgeoisie who lived by the exploitation of small owners.

The village was robbed by usurers and merchant-forestallers, the large landowners robbed the peasantry, which had little land, renting their land at high rates and often for a share of the crop.

In the big cities nestled large vulture-bankers and wholesale merchants who had a net of agents in the villages or who traded with the colonies.

Alongside with the bourgeoisie which exploited the small owners, stood the industrial bourgeoisie — the owners of shops and factories, of agricultural economies which applied hired labour in the vineyards, in the orchards, on the cattle ranches and on estates specializing in grain cultures. Of course, in actual life one person frequently combined: usurer-banker, and landowner, manufacturer and merchant, etc.

The concentration of capital was proceeding so rapidly that towards the beginning of the sixties a small group of dealers — 180—200 people and among them such multi-millionaires as for example the banker Rothchild and manufacturer Schneider concentrated in their hands almost the entire wealth of France.

In the period of the Bonapartist dictatorship of Napoleon the Third, the greatest influence was enjoyed by the financial gentry — bankers, usurers, large landowners and the upper strata of the industrial bourgeoisie. Thus, for example, the owner of the largest munition plants of Creuse — Schneider — was the head of the House of Deputies under Napoleon the Third.

**The Role of the Clergy.** In his policy Napoleon the Third relied not only upon brute force — on the bayonet of the soldier and the sword of the policeman. In addition to the army of 400,000 and gigantic administrative apparatus (about 500,000 officials) Napoleon the Third had at his disposal an army of about 40—50,000 monks. This «black» army held in its hands a considerable section of the schools and inspired in the toilers respect for the Government, religion and property.

**The Peasantry.** 68% of the French population in 1872 lived in the agricultural localities and only 32% in the cities. The differentiation of the peasantry in France had already proceeded far.

On the eve of the Commune the village had about 3 million agricultural workers and paupers, about 2 million peasants with dwarfish economies, — less than one hectare for each holding. Seventy-five percent of all the peasant holdings were small economies (up to 10 hectares) per family, 19% were middle peasants (from 10 to 40 hectares) and 4,7% were kulaks (well-to-do peasants) and large bourgeois economies (from 40 hectares and over).

The basic mass of the peasantry consisted of the owners of small and tiny land holdings — parcels. These parcels subjected to still further splitting up in the epoch of the Second Empire. While in 1850 France had 12 million parcels, which belonged to 7,800,000 owners, in 1870 such small holdings increased to 14 million and their owners to 9,000,000.

The differentiation of the peasantry was accelerated on account of high taxes and the big indebtedness of the peasantry. In the period of the Second Empire the peasants paid a direct land tax, taxes on products which were brought by the peasants into the cities, also a tax on the sale of land and innumerable indirect taxes. The peasantry was particularly oppressed by debts. The land property of France

was burdened with debts amounting to 12 billion francs. Frequently the peasant was only nominally the owner of land while in actual practice his income was distributed in advance among his creditors.

**The Working Class.**

According to the census of 1861 there were 2,900,000 industrial workers in France. For this number of workers there were 1,600,000 bosses. While in Paris each industrial enterprise had an average of 4.5 workers, for the entire country, this figure was still lower — consisting of only 1.7 workers. Such a low average of the number of workers per enterprise indicates that in France there were a large number of artisan enterprises. «Towards 1871,» wrote Lenin, «French capitalism was still poorly developed and at that time France was predominantly a country of the small bourgeoisie (artisans, peasants, shop-keepers, etc.).»

Although there were separate enterprises which had hundreds and thousands of workers, as for instance the metallurgical plants in Creuse, which employed about 10,000 workers and employees, nevertheless the basic mass of the workers was occupied in small textile, partially artisan enterprises using hand machines, in the production of clothing and building construction. There were 800,000 textile workers in France; 700,000 in the clothing industry, 400,000 builders and in the most concentrated metallurgical industry, only 50,000.

The conditions of the workers in the years of the Second Empire had noticeably worsened in spite of the economic rise. From the fifties to the seventies, wages increased from 10 to 40%; the price of products and house rent increased by 70%. The working day in Paris exceeded 11 hours and in the provinces as a rule over 12 hours, in some places, as for instance in the Upper Loire and in Lyons reaching up to 15 and even 17 hours.

Attempts of the workers to improve their situation by striking were answered by the Government occupying the factories by troops, as happened in three factories of Creuse in the fifties. The shops and factories were full of police-spies. Up to 1864 workers' unions (Coalition) were prohibited under the threat of imprisonment for terms up to 5 years. The Government permitted the organisation of workers' societies only under the leadership of the local clergymen or the mayor.

In 1852, the Government assigned ten million francs for the support of such societies organised under the surveillance of the clergy and police, and these were given free headquarters.

These privileged «workers' societies» had to instigate a split in the ranks of the proletariat and facilitate supervision over the workers.

**The Sharpening of Class Contradictions.**

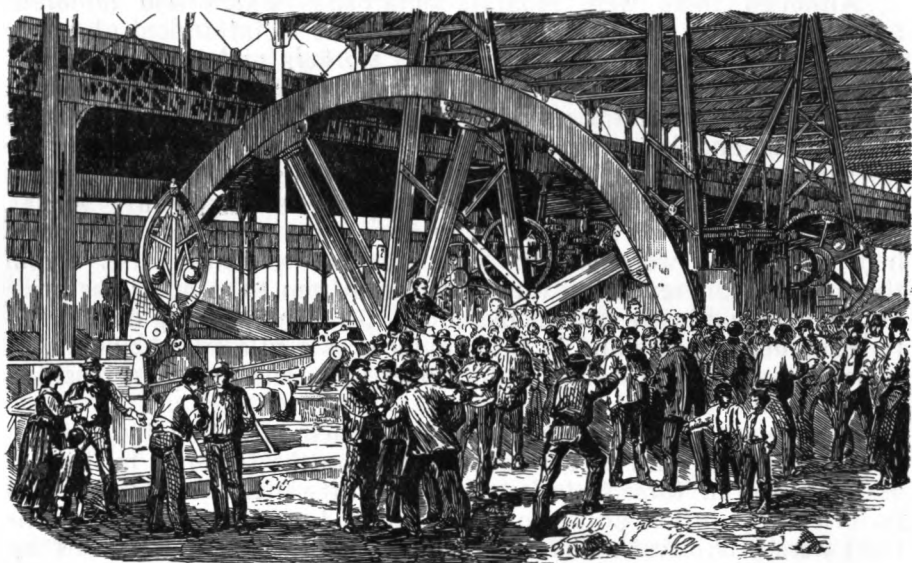
The crisis of 1866 which brought about mass bankruptcies and stagnation of business, particularly sharpened the class contradictions of the Second Empire. The class struggle of the workers against the bourgeoisie in the fifties had predominantly a character of economic strikes. In the period from 1853 to 1859, 749 trials about strikes took place, 4,652 workers were indicted and 3,909 workers condemned.

The abolition, forced by the workers, of the notorious law of Le Chapelier which prohibited workers' coalition and consequently also strikes, did very little to improve the situation. Inasmuch as the law of 1864 permitted only «peaceful» strikes, and any strike could at will be



declared a forceful strike and court action started against the strikers. In spite of this, in the second half of the sixties the strike wave continued to grow, particularly in connection with the crisis of 1866 which brought about mass bankruptcies and stagnation in business. The sharpening of the class struggle and the rise of the strike movement facilitated the successful work of the International in France. While up to 1867 there were in Paris not more than 600 members of the International, after the French section took an active part in the strike struggle, the International was joined by thousands of French workers and in some cases even by all the workers of whole suburbs and shops. The number of sections of the International grew to 25.

The Government of Napoleon the Third, fearing the rapid growth of influence of the French section of the International, initiated in



Strike in Creuse.

1868, two court trials and persecuted members of the International, inflicting brutal punishment upon them and breaking up the organization of the International in France.

In spite of the Government persecution, the French section of the International rapidly recovered and in the struggle against it the Government organized a third court trial in 1870. The international defence of the members of the International during the trial, facilitated the spreading of the popularity of the International among the French workers and the trials did not achieve the aim intended by the Government.

It was undoubtedly due to the increasing influence of the International that the strikes in the late sixties, were growing over into political strikes bearing an exceedingly stubborn and relentless character.

The troops of the Emperor twice shot at workers during a large political strike of miners in 1869 which embraced the entire Loire basin;

during the first shooting in Recogne, 13 strikers were killed and two wounded, and in the second — 15 were killed and 20 wounded.

The strike in Creuse in 1870 provoked by the dismissal of the member of the International, Assie, also had a political character.

The stubborn struggle of the city workers brought with it the movement in the village. During the strike in Creuse the strikers attempted to establish contact with the peasantry. In 1870, Malone, a member of the International declared that at the next Congress the French organizations of the International would already have representatives from among the peasants.

A sharp dissatisfaction with the Government prevailed not only in the ranks of the workers and peasants but also among the bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeois masses in the city. The industrial bourgeoisie was exceedingly dissatisfied with the commercial agreement with England concluded in 1860 by Napoleon the Third. By a special agreement, low tariff duties were established for English industrial goods and this was affecting the weaker French industry. The heavy taxes levied for the maintenance of the administration and the clergy, mobilization for carrying on the prolonged and bloody wars with African tribes who fought against the invasion of French colonizers in Algier, Morocco, and other costly and unsuccessful adventures of the imperial Government, aroused the dissatisfaction of the petty bourgeois masses of the city.

The expedition to Mexico aroused particular dissatisfaction with the Government. Napoleon the Third considered the beginning of the civil war in the USA as a convenient moment for seizing territory in America. In 1806, France in alliance with England and Spain, sent troops to Central America for the purpose of placing the henchman of France, Archduke Maximilian, on the throne in the independent State of Mexico. For two years the French troops carried on a bloody war in Mexico and on the 3rd of June 1863 the French troops occupied the capital of Mexico, Mexico City.

This war took many lives and cost the French people a great amount of money. And finally Maximilian occupied the throne of Mexico with the support of the French troops. But in 1867 he was captured and shot by rebelling Mexicans.

The brutal violence of the French Government over the independent State of Mexico, the brutal treatment of the Mexican revolutionists by the French troops, the great loss of people and colossal expenditures on the unsuccessful Mexican adventure aroused in the broad mass of the people of France a stormy indignation against Napoleon the Third.

In spite of the strict censorship, sharp attacks against the Government of Napoleon the Third began to appear systematically in the bourgeois papers, journals and leaflets.

The general dissatisfaction and class contradictions sharpened to such an extent that one of the close advisers of Napoleon the Third, Silvestre De Sassi, wrote in 1870: «From all sides appeared the most threatening signs of civil and social war... The bourgeoisie is going mad with some kind of Liberalism and the population of workers' cities — with Socialism».

What way out of this situation did Napoleon and the members of his Government intend to find? A reply to this is given by the same De Sassi. «It was just then that the Emperor decided to risk the last stake — the war against Prussia» — he writes. «I did

not fight against the external war», continues the author «because it seemed to me as the last resort and the last means for saving the fatherland.»

**The French-Prussian war.**

The growing power of Prussia and its attempts to unite Germany under its hegemony, constituted a threat to the domination of France on the European continent. For this reason France combatted in every possible way the attempts for the unification of the scattered German states. When Prussia, contrary to the opposition of France, approached the realization of Bismarck's plans, France put forth the demand for land concessions from Germany.

During the war of 1866 with Austria, Bismarck promised Napoleon the Third a part of the German territory in return for his neutrality in that war. When the war ended in a decisive defeat of Austria, Bismarck considered it unnecessary to carry out his promise, in view of the fact that after victory over Austria, Prussia became sufficiently strong to be able to refuse to carry it out.

France was prompted to war by the *reactionary* attempts to prevent the unification of the scattered German states, and, also by the attempt of the dynasty and the Government to strengthen its position by a successful war to be followed by the capture of the coal basins in the Ruhr and the left shore of the Rhine. On the other hand, for Germany the war was a means for the creation of a single national State and for this reason was a historically progressive and defensive war. The workers clearly understood this fact.

For this reason, when the war broke out in July 1870 the International, in its appeal to the workers, written by Marx, explained the existing conditions and pointed out to the workers how they must act under these conditions. In the appeal of the International, the international policy of the proletariat was contrasted to the international policy of the bourgeoisie and landlords as radically different from it. In the same document it was emphasized that on the part of official France this war was a reactionary dynastic war. «The war, is it just?» — asks Marx and answers — «No! The war, is it national? No! It is merely — Dynastic». For Bonaparte the war was the continuation of his policy of strengthening his dynasty, the strengthening of his power in France. For this reason the workers also had to continue the same policy in relation to Bonaparte and his war as they carried on in the time of peace. In peace times they strove to weaken Bonaparte in order to overthrow him later on. During the war they had to strive for the same thing.

«On the German side», stated the appeal, «the war is a war of defense». But who put Germany to the necessity of defending herself? The responsibility lay with Prussia, who in suppressing the democratic movement for the unification of Germany in a Bonapartist counter-revolutionary manner, attempted to do it by the force of arms. In this way Prussia forced this war on Germany compelling it to defend itself with arms. For this reason the German workers have to watch closely counter-revolutionary Prussia who of course, would not limit itself only to the destruction of Bonaparte but would then attempt to plunder France. The German workers have to prevent this defensive

war from degenerating into a war of plunder. Otherwise the victory of Prussia would have meant their defeat.

Proceeding from these principles, proclaimed by them in the name of the International, Marx and Engels approved the tactics of the representatives of the German proletariat — Bebel and Wilhelm Liebknecht, when in the beginning of the war they refused to vote for military credits in the North German Reichstag. For this Bismarck imprisoned Bebel and Liebknecht in a fortress as «traitors of the State».

**The Military Operations.** In spite of the fact that the French Government was for a long time preparing for a war with Prussia, the French troops suffered severe defeats in the very first battles with the Germans (August 4th near Weissenburg, August 6th — near Forbach).

The poor equipment and training of the army, the unpopularity of the war, the antagonism of French workers and peasants against the Government of Napoleon the Third, had the inevitable effect — the French troops were compelled to retreat into the heart of the country. Shortly afterwards, one section of the Army, under the command of General Bazaine was surrounded by the Germans in the fortress of Metz while another, larger section, under the command of Marshal MacMahon and of the Emperor himself, was surrounded by the troops of the Prussian Field Marshal Moltke.

On the 1st of September a bloody battle took place near Sedan in which the Prussian troops captured 86,000 soldiers, 39 Generals, the Emperor himself, and also 650 cannons.

### § 33. The Fall of the Second Empire.

**The Revolution of the Fourth of September 1870.**

On learning of the destruction of the army and the shameful surrender of the Emperor into captivity, the masses of Paris forced their way into the Hall of Assembly in the House of Deputies on September 4th and compelled them to proclaim a Republic.

However, the unpreparedness of the masses for the capture of power — the absence of a proletarian Party — made it possible for the big bourgeoisie to form a new Provisional Government.

At the head of this «Government of National Defence» or of «National Treason» as it was called, were the enemies of the working class and of Socialism, — General Trochu (the chairman of the Council of Ministers and the military marshal of the capital), who did not conceal his monarchistic sympathies, and a lawyer Julius Favre (Minister for Foreign Affairs).

**The Siege of Paris and the Uprising of October 21st and of January 22nd.**

At the same time the Prussians were marching on Paris, substantiating that about which Marx warned the German workers. Prussia did not want to end the war before plundering France. On September 18th the Prussian troops besieged Paris.

When the revolution took place in France on September 4th, the General Council of the International addressed a new appeal to workingmen of all countries. This was also written by Marx. In this document of the International, Marx demanded from

the German workers that they exert their entire power in order to compel the Prussian Government to stop the war of conquest and immediately to conclude an honourable peace with the French republic. It called on the German workers to immediately initiate an active class struggle against the Bismarck Government. In appealing to the French workers, Marx made clear to them that the Republic of September 4th — is not their republic. At the head of it stood a Government of the enemies of the working class.

The working class of France was confronted with the task of winning its own workers' republic. But at the time the French proletariat was in an exceedingly difficult position. To come out immediately while the Prussians are at the gates of Paris, would be «a desperate stupidity», because at the moment the proletariat of France had not as yet succeeded to a sufficient extent in organizing for the capture of power. The workers had to utilize the freedom of the republic for the greatest strengthening of their organization. The strengthening of the organization would give the workers a Herculean power to successfully turn the guns which they have in their hands against their bourgeoisie and to secure their own workers' republic.

However, during the period of the siege the organization of the working class, and its preparation for the struggle against the bourgeoisie was hindered.

The siege of Paris brought about unemployment: a great number of industrial enterprises of the capital manufacturing articles of luxury for France and Europe were compelled to close down.

Then came the shortage of foodstuffs and fuel. Prices on all articles of necessity grew incredibly. The toiling population of Paris was forced to live on rats and on the cat and dog meat.

The four months of siege brought exceptionally hard suffering to the workers and artisans of the capital. The Government of Trochu was doing everything in its power to preserve the freedom of trade in the besieged city, in permitting the merchant-speculators to enrich themselves at the suffering of the people.

The Government was procrastinating in the question of introducing the ration system and in establishing stable prices on products, it did not undertake any measures for taking an inventory of the food reserves in Paris.

While the eastern workers' districts of Paris were dying from want and starvation, in the central and particularly in the western regions, the bourgeoisie was enriching itself in speculation on food products.

During the first days of siege a patriotic feeling embraced not only the petty bourgeoisie but also the workers of Paris. Even Blanqui in his paper «Fatherland in Danger» at that time called for the preservation of class peace and was ready to support the Government of Trochu and Favre.

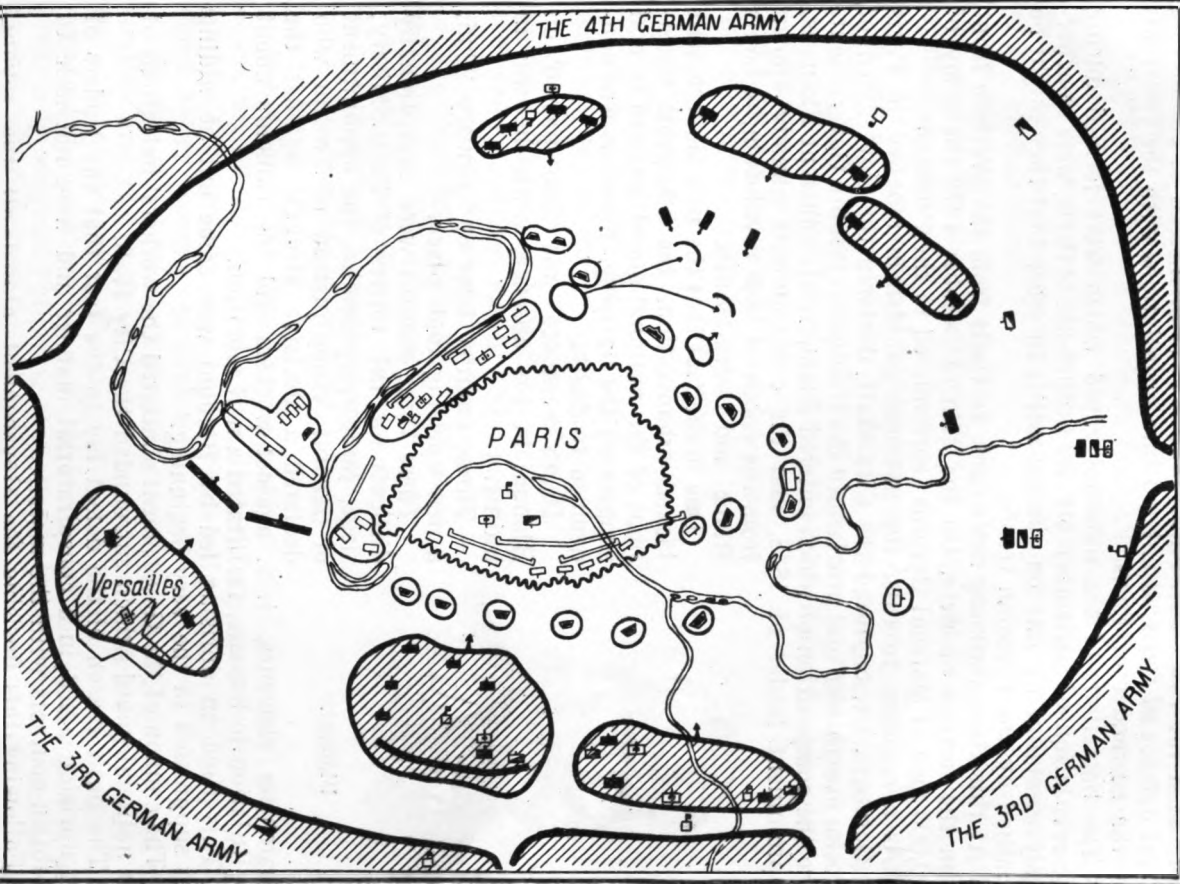
Shortly afterwards, however, he opened his eyes to the criminal policy of this Government of the bourgeoisie. Already in the beginning of October he wrote:

«We had before us only the Prussians — the internal Prussians and external Prussians»... «Financiers, owners, merchants, the seniors of the money bag — upon them relied the Government of National Defence».

# FRANCO = PRUSSIAN WAR 1870-71

## THE SIEGE OF PARIS

-  GERMAN TROOPS
-  FRENCH TROOPS
-  GERMAN CORPS
-  FRENCH CORPS
-  DIVISION
-  BATTERY
-  STAFF
-  FORTS



The Bourgeois Government of Trochu feared the workers much more than the Prussians. And, for this reason, instead of conducting a real defence of Paris, it entered into negotiations with the Prussians for the surrender of Paris.

The battalions of the national guard which were formed during the revolution of September 4th, for the defence of Paris, were treacherously sent one by one on aimless sallies in order that they might be smashed by the Prussian troops.

At this time alarming news came to Paris from the Western front from the fortress of Metz. On the 27th of October 1870 the army of 200,000 men of Marshal Bazaine surrendered to the Prussians.

As a response to this, the national guardsmen rebelled in Paris on October 31st, captured the City Hall, declared the Government of Trochu overthrown and proclaimed the Blanquist-Jacobin Government, into the composition of which entered Blanqui, his adherent Flourens, a prominent leader of 1848, and the compromisers already known from the epoch of 1848 revolution, — Louis Blanc and Ledru-Rollin.

Due to the fact that the new Government lacked organization, the bourgeois battalions of the national guard arrested it and suppressed the uprising. Flourens was condemned to death.

Death sentence was also passed on Blanqui in his absence, while he was in hiding.

Three months later on January 22nd, a new uprising took place.

These three months were exceptionally difficult for the toilers of Paris. Misery, siege, hunger, epidemics, the appointment of General Vinoy instead of Trochu who declared a decisive struggle against the

«anarchist» elements, i. e. against workers and the rumours about capitulation to Prussia, facilitated a new rebellion.

This time an uprising led by Blanqui who came out of hiding was suppressed in the very beginning.

The cannon of the Government shattered the workers' battalions of the national guard which surrounded the City Hall.

The basic reason of the defeat lay in the fact that the leaders of the uprising acted in a conspiratorial manner and were not able to establish contacts with the masses.

Following this uprising the Government closed all the revolutionary clubs in Paris.

#### **The Formation of the Central Committee of the National Guard.**

The experience of two uprisings did not pass in vain for the Parisian workers. They began to create their own military organization. Already in September and in February an organization uniting the entire national guard, — the Central Committee of the National Guard from separate councils formed into various regiments and battalions was created.



Blanqui.



Six days after the uprising on January 28th, the Government of the National Defence surrendered Paris to the Prussians.

In the name of the whole of France an order of capitulation was signed which provided for the disarmament of the regular troops of Paris (with the exception of the National Guard), for a number of forts to be surrendered to the Prussians and for Paris to pay an indemnity of 200 million francs.

In addition the surrender and armistice was followed by the calling of a National Assembly which was to approve the peace proposed by the conquerors.

#### **The National Assembly in Bordeaux.**

Elections to the National Assembly were set for the 8th of February. During these elections 43 departments were occupied by German troops. There could be no talk about any kind of freedom of pre-election agitation.

The press, which was in the hands of Thiers and the Bonapartists, inspired the peasantry, suffering from the burden of war, to believe that Thiers and the bourgeoisie desired peace at a time when Paris wanted war.

In the churches the Catholic clergy came out for the bourgeois candidates.

An overwhelming majority of candidates of the bourgeois Parties were elected, and in addition out of 750 deputies who came to Bordeaux to the opening of the National Assembly, 450 were Monarchists. On February 13th this Assembly elected Thiers, the man who in 1834 took part in the suppression of the Lyons uprising, as the head of the Government.



Thiers.

The Legislative Assembly approved the armistice and also countersigned the conditions of the disgraceful peace with the Germans. (France undertook to pay a colossal indemnity of 5 billion and surrendered Alsace Lorraine to Germany.)

At the same time the bourgeoisie initiated an offensive against the workers and the National Guard in order to prepare its return to Paris. By the decree of February 15th, the National Guardsmen were deprived of even the small pay (one and a half francs a day) which they previously received. Following that, the National Assembly refused to approve postponement in the payment of rent which the Parisians had not paid since the time of the siege. In this way three-fourths of the population were threatened with eviction for non-payment of rent.

The revolutionary papers were outlawed. And finally the Government concentrated its troops on Paris and decided to disarm the workers.

### **§ 34. The Commune.**

On the night of March 18th Government troops were advanced toward the hills of Montmartre. There were cannons purchased with the voluntary contributions of the National Guard. The Govern-

ment decided to take these cannons away from the workers. However, it miscalculated.

«From early in the morning detachments of the regular troops were moved on Montmartre. A handful of National Guardsmen who guarded the cannon on the square of St. Pierre were caught unawares and the cannons were taken away. They were brought down toward Paris without any opposition. But here a crowd of women citizens of Montmartre rushed to the square of Abbat. They grabbed the bridles of the horses, surrounded the soldiers and told them: «And so! You serve the enemies of the people, you who are people's children! Are you not tired of being the blind tools in the hands of your oppressors? Are you not ashamed to serve the traitors?» The soldiers stopped, at first hesitating to wound the women and to crush the children who were clinging on the wheels of the guns; and then realizing the correctness of these reproaches, they raised the guns with the butts up. The people screamed with joy. At last the proletarians divided by various names and various costumes understood each other and united into one whole. The regular army will be no more. There will be no more tyrants! The soldiers and the national guardsmen embraced each other. The cannons were installed in the old places. Confidence, enthusiasm and unconquerable courage filled the hearts of all».

This is the way one of the contemporary papers describes these events.

During the day the battalions of the National Guards under the command of the workers, Virelan and Burger, on the order of the Central Committee of the National Guard descended from the hills of Montmartre to the centre of the city and in the evening all the Government institutions were in the hands of the rebels. Red banners waved over the City Hall and the Ministry of War.

Thiers and his Ministers fled into the suburbs of Paris — Versailles (25 kilometres from the capital).

In this way the uprising of March 18th was not prepared in advance but came as a spontaneous movement of the proletarian masses, as a retaliation against the offensive initiated by the bourgeoisie.

On the *day of the 18th of March* which at the present time is celebrated as an international day of proletariat solidarity in the struggle against capitalism, *the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie was overthrown and replaced by the dictatorship of the proletariat for the first time in history.* The power came into the hands of the Central Committee of the National Guard, which represented the armed workers and artisans of the capital.

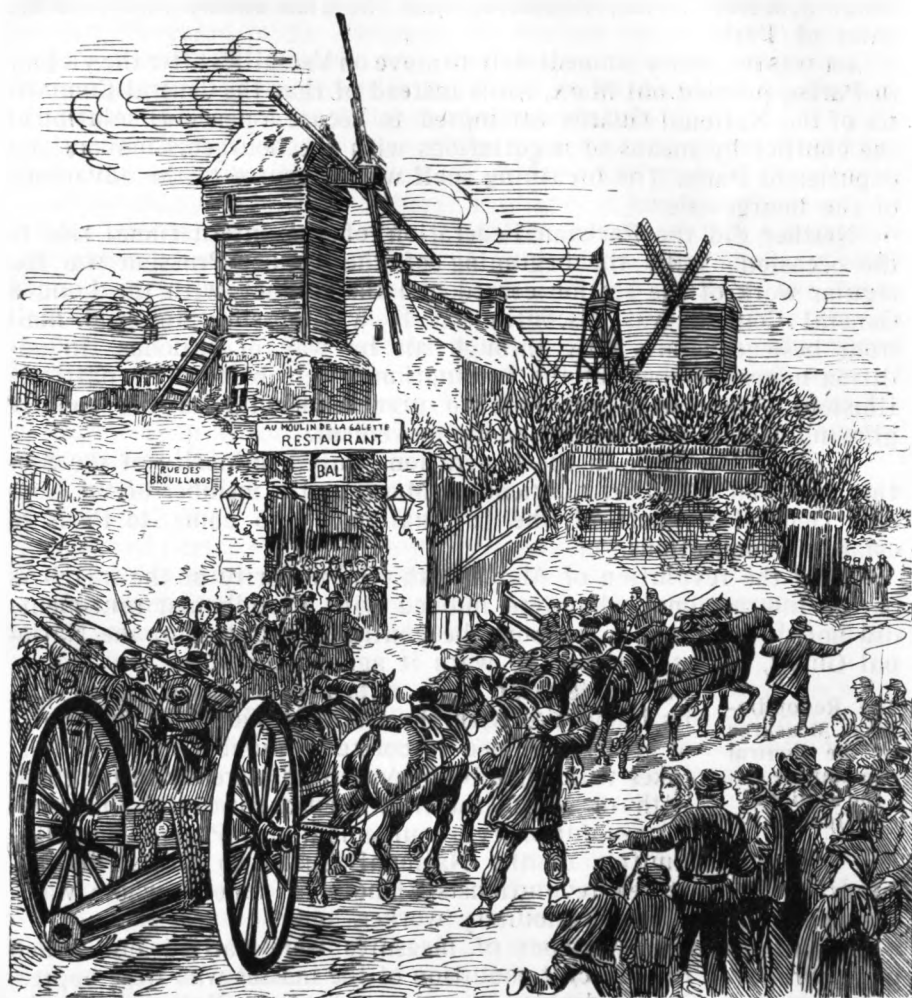
At the same time the transference of power into the hands of the proletariat meant the beginning of the civil war, the beginning of the mad and bitter resistance of the bourgeoisie to the proletarian revolution.

**The Mistakes  
of the Central  
Committee of  
the National  
Guard.**

The fact that the French proletariat did not have a truly revolutionary Party capable of directing the struggle, was a great set-back from the very first steps of the new workers power.

The Central Committee of the National Guard immediately manifested a lack of determination and attempted to make

peace with the class enemies who fled to Versailles. It did not do anything to crush immediately the nest of counter-revolution. It gave to the head of the bourgeois Government, Thiers, and to the entire gang of his henchmen, sufficient time in Versailles calmly to prepare their forces for the suppression of the dictatorship of proletariat in Paris.



The workers bringing back to Montmartre the guns.

But this was not sufficient, the members of the Central Committee of the National Guard, fearing that they would be reproached with the illegal capture of power, spent the first days conducting the elections to the Commune.

Instead of beginning a relentless armed suppression of the exploiters with the very first days of the revolution, instead of immediately initiating the creation of militant organs of the proletarian dictatorship, the Central Committee of the National Guard declared, from

the very first day, that it considered its authority temporary until the elections of the Commune.

In its appeal «To the Population of Paris» the Central Committee of the National Guard stated that «upon the elections depends its future» and called upon the masses to quietly carry on their usual peaceful labour, forgetting that the class enemy stands at the gates of Paris.

«It was necessary immediately to move on Versailles after the victory in Paris», pointed out Marx, while instead of that the Central Committee of the National Guards attempted to secure a peaceful solution of the conflict by means of negotiations with the bourgeois mayors and deputies of Paris. The breathing spell was of course to the advantage of the bourgeoisie.

Neither did the Parisian Federation of the International rise to the occasion. With the beginning of the Franco-Prussian war the regular work of the section ceased and the contact with the London General Council was discontinued. It was possible to send mail from besieged Paris only through air by way of balloons. In addition many members of the International were blinded by patriotic illusions. They were not able to give leadership to the rapidly growing labour and revolutionary movement.

A split took place in the Federation. Only a minority of the Section followed *Seraille*, a friend of Marx, and a member of the London General Council of the International who came to Paris to establish connections.

After the revolution of March 18th the majority of the members of the International who were imbued with Proudhonist sentiments did not do anything to support the Central Committee of the National Guard, to assist it and to warn it against mistakes.

**The Revolutionary Measures of the Central Committee of the National Guard.**

The proletarian class nature of the new power and its blood ties with the working masses in the course of struggle helped to correct a number of crude mistakes which had been committed. Already on the 22nd-24th of March the first open activities of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie in Paris compelled the Central Committee of the National Guard to entrust the military power to three revolutionists-Blanquists, among whom was a staunch fighter, Duval, a foundry worker.

Simultaneously a number of measures were carried out which greatly relieved the difficult condition of the masses who were oppressed by poverty: it was decided to pay wages to the National Guardsmen, the payment of notes and house rent was again postponed, the domestic articles and tools pawned in the municipal loan banks were returned to the poor.

**The Elections and the Composition of the Commune.**

On the 26th of March the elections to the Commune took place. The overwhelming majority of the toiling population in Paris participated in this election. Altogether 85 members of the Commune were elected. Of them 25 were workers, including 13 members of the International. Among the remaining, the majority i. e. 43, consisted of employees and professional people — journalists,

doctors, teachers, lawyers, etc., 17 members elected to the Commune were representatives of the bourgeoisie but they hastened to resign their authority; in this way the Commune was composed only of the representatives of the toilers of the capital.

Following the resignation of the bourgeois representatives, supplementary elections to the Commune took place and the number of workers increased to 30. Although the workers did not constitute the majority in the Commune nevertheless they were the main leading force, inasmuch as the power in Paris was in the hands of the National Guard, in the hands of the «armed proletariat».

On the 28th of March the official proclamation of the Commune took place attended by a gathering of the great mass of the people.

«How many people were there? Probably a hundred thousand, — relates one of the eyewitnesses about the events of this remarkable day. Whence had they come? From all parts of the city. The neighbouring streets swarmed with armed people and the points of the bayonets, shining in the sun, flooded the square with bright lights like the flash of lightning»... «And suddenly the thunder of cannons»; — he relates further, — «the singing grows louder, it thunders; a gigantic wave of banners, bayonets, caps, surges back and forth — crowds near the platform. Then all of this is drowned in a general outburst from the huge crowd. All the people have but one heart, but one voice».

Who constituted this Commune elected and proclaimed with such enthusiasm? Who composed it and who in it represented the proletarians of Paris? From the very beginning in the work of the Commune two currents could be observed.

The minority of the members (20 people) of the Commune belonged to the camp of the Proudhonites, and to the Anarchist groups which were near them.

The majority belonged to the Parties of Democrats-Jacobins (36 people) and Blanquists (12 people). Altogether the Council of the Commune, after the supplementary elections (April 16th), included 25 members of the International. The Council of the Commune also included people who did not belong to any Party.

All more or less outstanding leaders of the workers and revolutionary movements were elected to the Commune.

Among its members one could find: a talented organizer of the Parisian trade union movement and a member of the International the book-binder *Varlin* and the Hungarian worker *Frankel* who was well-known to Marx and at that time was in Paris; and the Blanquist *Flourens*, *Duval*, *Raoul*, *Rigault*, and finally, the Jacobins *Delescluse* and *Felix Pyat*. Only August Blanqui was not among the members of the Commune: he was elected by the overwhelming majority of votes in two workers districts in Paris, but on the eve of the revolution, March 18th, he was arrested and was again pining away in jail.

*In this way, the party composition of the commune was very varied. It was composed, in addition to the representatives of workers and artisans, also of many petty bourgeois democrats Jacobins. This came as a consequence of the still insufficient maturity of the Parisian proletariat and the absence of a strong kernel of industrial workers in Paris.*

**The Programme  
of the  
Commune.**

All of the Communards agreed among themselves that the Commune is the only form of the social order under which it is possible to achieve the true liberation of the working class from the yoke of capital. However, various fractions of Socialists put into the conception of the Commune the most varied contents.

*The Proudhonist minority* considered the creation of the Commune as the first step towards the destruction of all State power in France and the creation of an anarchistic collective commune. At the same time the very course of the revolution was driving the Proudhonists, the majority of whom were of «left» tendency, to actions contrary to this theory. The «left» Proudhonists, the members of the International, Var! in, Frankel and others, freed themselves from anarchistic illusions in the process of realization of the proletarian dictatorship.

The majority in the Commune consisted of Blanquists and Jacobins. Trained in the school of conspiracy, the *Blanquists* were Socialists «only by revolutionary proletarian instinct». They were striving for Communism and stood for the establishment of the dictatorship and for determined action, but they did not have a definite plan of political and economic measures.

And finally, the petty-bourgeois *Jacobins* assumed that the Commune is called upon to establish the revolutionary dictatorship following the example of the Jacobin Commune of 1792—1794. The new Jacobins did not strive for Socialism and just as the old Jacobins of the 18th century they were fighting only against big capital, and not against the private property of the means of production in general.

The members of the Commune therefore did not have a clear, precise, and definite plan of action. They understood that they represented the power of the workers. The majority of them were adherents of the dictatorship. But they had only a hazy conception as to the course of action.

«We did not intend to separate the people and the bourgeoisie, to advocate hatred and civil war, but on the contrary we would like to reconcile all citizens» (from the appeal of the Commune).

Nevertheless the class feeling and the proletarian instinct came to the assistance of the Communards: in the course of the struggle it suggested to them the correct decisions. In addition to that the Commune reflected the influence of Marx who maintained connections with individual Communards.

The movement of the Commune which was the first Government of the working class, in the course of the development of events «inevitably had to take on a socialist colouring, i. e. to begin striving for the overthrow of the power of the bourgeoisie, the power of capital, to destroy the very foundation of the present social order» (Lenin).

**The Commune  
as a new Type  
of the State.**

«Its secret (of the commune) consisted in the fact that in its very essence it was the government of the working class. The Commune was conceived in the revolution. Its sources lay in the direct initiative of the masses of people from below» (Lenin).

*The Commune smashed the old state machine.* In contrast to the bourgeois State, the administrative power in the Commune was not separated

rated from the legislative and judicial. The Commune was an active collegium, which united in its hands the entire power.

At the head of each branch of administration stood a commission of 5—8 people. The members of the Commissions were members of the Commune. At the head of all commissions stood the Executive Committee of 7 people. The best workers were promoted by this new power to leading posts. The book-binder, *Varlin*, for example, was a member of the Financial Commission and later he headed the military supply departments; the jewelry worker, *Frankel*, was a member of the Commission of Labour and Exchange, the engraver *Teis* headed the Post-Office Department, the worker *Camélinat* had charge of the State mint, and the carpenter *Pentie* was in charge of work in the national print shop.

All the persons in administrative positions were elected and re-elected after a definite period of time. And during the Commune, just as here, under the Soviet system, the electors could at any moment recall an elected official, who did not justify the confidence of the electors, and replace him with another. With this it is important to emphasize that the majority of representatives consisted of workers or the recognized representatives of the working class. None of the officials of the Commune could receive a salary over 6,000 francs a year (about 2,300 roubles), i. e. not higher than the average general earnings of a qualified worker.

The permanent army was destroyed. The regular army was demobilized, the military force of the Commune was «the armed people themselves» — the National Guard which was composed of workers.

The State order of the Commune was protected, not by the old police — the agents of the bourgeois classes, but by the armed workers themselves and at that, the police of the Commune were deprived of political functions, they were responsible to the Commune and could be removed at any time.

In spite of the fact that formally the Commune was only in power in Paris, in reality it acted in the name of the proletariat and oppressed peasantry of the whole of France. In the plan of the State organization of France drawn up by the Commune, it was pointed out that the Commune must become the political form even of the tiniest village which would elect its delegation to the higher organs of the Commune.

Instead of the old demolished state machine which forcibly united all sections of the nation, the Commune was to be formed from the voluntary union of the proletarian communes of the country. The government of the Commune, in contrast to the exploiting system of bourgeois centralism, was to «establish a conscious, Democratic, proletarian centralism» (*Lenin*).

The Commune was the transition form of the State. Democracy carried out by the Commune with the greatest completeness and consistency, became a proletarian democracy under which the majority of the people, the workers and the toilers, enjoyed a true political freedom, carried on the work of the administration themselves, under which the working class carried out a policy for the destruction of classes and in this way prepared the way for the withering away of the State as the organization of class domination and suppression.



In contrast to the national-bourgeois State, the Commune was a proletarian, international state.

**The Participation of the Masses in the New Regime.** In administering the government, the Commune relied on the masses and, in part, on the workingmen's and artisan clubs, which were organized in all sections of the capital and actively assisted the Commune in its work.

The clubs helped in the struggle against the counter-revolution, introduced their proposals for revolutionary measures and helped to carry them out into life. The Jacobin and Blanquist orators enjoyed the greatest popularity in the clubs. The Communist ideas advanced by the Blanquists were met with great sympathy. At the mass meetings and assemblies which were attended by thousands of the Parisian workers and poor of the capital the vital political questions were discussed. The people's clubs subjected to criticism the indecisiveness of the Commune in the attack on private property of the bourgeoisie and in the suppression of the counter-revolutionary forces.

Thus, for example, in the beginning of May in the Woman's Club «Liberation» one of the Commune women in speaking about the sabotage of the open and hidden adherents of Versailles, demanded relentless punishment of all those who resist the Commune: «It is necessary to force these masters into subordination or to shoot them down.» During the days of siege of the Commune in the clubs were discussed the questions of how to improve the food supplies of the fighters at the front, of relieving the families of Communars who were on the front lines of defence from payment of rent, etc. Many members of the Commune constantly attended the clubs and frequently acted as chairmen of meetings and reported to the Commune the demands of the masses. «The Commune is charged with softheartedness and inactivity» — stated its member — Mio — at a Session of the Commune. A number of similar speeches of the members of the Commune testify that the Commune was keenly attentive to the revolutionary demands of the masses.

The Women's Clubs were carrying on very energetic activity. In these clubs and alongside politics, much attention was devoted to the condition of the women in the family and in the State, to the question of child education, etc. And when the Versailles began the offensive against the Commune, a group of women workers, amongst whom was a Russian revolutionist, *Elisabeth Dmitrieva*, established «the Union of Women for the Defence of Paris and the Relief of the Wounded.» This Union had a Central Committee and a net of district organizations. The Commission of Labour of the Commune in recognizing the proletarian composition and great influence of this Union, entrusted it with the organization of women into syndicates, i. e. trade unions.

The lower sections of the International were also showing lively activity, particularly in the sphere of measures relative to the labour question. Thus, on the 23rd of May the section of *Batignole* and *Term* sharply criticized the Commission of Labour and Exchange which «leaves labour in the hands of exploiters and capitalists».

The activities of trade union organizations also revived under the Commune. The abolition of night labour in the bakeries was carried out by the Commune on the initiative of the Bakers trade union organization.

When on the 15th of May a part of the members of the Commune (consisting mostly of the adherents of the International-Proudhonists) left the Commune protesting against the transference of power to the Committee of Public Safety, the workers discussed this question at their meetings condemning their action and compelling the members who left the Commune to correct their mistakes.

The lower organization of the National Guard, «the Sub-Commission», carried out the confiscation of the property of the counter-revolutionists, controlled railway transport, etc. The workers participated actively through the press, signaling in the newspapers of the Commune the cases of sabotage, wrecking and proposing revolutionary measures. The facts cited show that the Commune was connected closely with the proletarian masses and emphasized the distinction between the Commune as a proletarian dictatorship as against the Parliamentary bourgeois State.

**The Labour  
Policy of the  
Commune.**

The labour policy of the Commune also testifies to its proletarian character. The Committee on labour questions consisted almost entirely of workers and was under the leadership of a member of the International — the left Proudhonist, Frankel.

In order to liquidate unemployment the Commission confiscated the shops deserted by the bosses and organized production by the workers themselves without the bosses. The workers, together with the elected administration of the enterprise, worked out the production plan of the enterprise and established order in these enterprises (the decree of April 16th).

Public work was also organised for the unemployed (including repair shops) for 1,800 people (for the unemployed women) and a Public Bureau was organized to find work for the unemployed. In spite of the stubborn resistance of the bosses the Commune carried out into life, with determined measures, the decree of April 20th on the prohibition of night labour in the bakeries.

Fines imposed by the bosses on the workers, were prohibited and rates of wages established by the contractors for workers were placed under control.

On May 12th on the proposal of the commission, the Commune adopted a decree calling for the revision and, if necessary, the breaking of agreements with contractors who took orders from the Commune, and required the establishment of satisfactory wages for the workers hired by the contractor.

At the same time it was found advisable to turn over all orders directly to workers' artels.

In order to improve the housing conditions of the workers the Commune confiscated the apartments of the rich who fled to Versailles and moved workers into these apartments.

On April 16th, the Commune appointed a chief controller and 8 commissars for the railways of the private company in order to establish on these railways workers' control.

The question of the 8-hour day was placed on the agenda on the initiative of the chairman of the Labour Commission, Frankel, but was not realized due to the lack of time.

**Other So-  
cial-Econo-  
mic Measures  
of the Com-  
mune.**

The fact that the Commune established a three-year moratorium on the payment of debts, was of great significance for the Paris poor. The Commune was also active in the solution of the food problem. Speculation was severely persecuted. Food products were purchased in large quantities and distributed through public shops at reduced prices.

The activity of the Commune directed towards the *liberation of toiling women and in the sphere of general education* had a particularly great significance.

The Commune equalized the wages of women to that of men. It took measures for the organization of creches and kinder-gardens in the workers' districts.

The Commune separated the church from the State, threw out the priests from the schools, ordered all icons thrown out and prohibited the reading of prayers. It also proposed to extend a whole network of «labour» technical trade schools and to make higher education available for workers' children.

The Commune transformed many churches into public clubs. And from the pulpits of these churches, which were now transformed into tribunals, were heard revolutionary speeches.

«The Commune did not succeed in doing very much along the lines of the purely social sphere, but even the little that was done, nevertheless, demonstrated sufficiently clearly its character as a people's workers' government».

**The Commune and the Peasantry.** The establishment of union with the poorest peasantry was the main condition for victory and strengthening of the Commune.

Lenin pointed out that «without such a union the democracy is unstable and the Socialist transformation is impossible».

In the meantime, the Commune was a besieged city, and in addition to that, not one of the parties of the Commune had broad and firm organizational ties with the village.

In its appeals, the Commune called upon the peasantry, attempting to draw it on the side of the revolution. For example, here is what was stated in one of the appeals, April 29th, addressed to agricultural workers: «At last Paris has won—bear this firmly in mind, you worker of the land, the propertyless wage worker, small property owners who are being devoured by usurers, by rich landlords, by landholders, — all of you who sow, harvest and toil in the sweat of your brow only in order that the best part of the fruits of your labour should fall into hands of some idlers — in the final analysis Paris wants *land for the peasants, the means of production — for the workers, work — for all*».

On account of the reasons stated above and also due to the short period of the existence of the Commune, it was not successful in arousing the oppressed masses of the French village, where there were many agricultural workers and poor peasants who were oppressed by debts and who suffered from a shortage of land, against the bourgeoisie.

If the Commune had been successful in securing an ally in the village, it would have had a different fate. Lenin points out that—«*three months of free connections of municipal Paris with the provinces would have brought about a general peasant uprising*».

**The First International and the Commune.** The Communards were not able to receive the regular advice and directives from Marx and the General Council which they so badly needed. Only a few rare letters would slip through from Paris to London and back, and for this reason the Commune was deprived of the strong Party leadership which it needed so badly.

Marx, who in the September appeal of the General Council advised the workers not to come out until they had consolidated their forces and strengthened their class organization, on learning about the events of March 18th, not only did not condemn the workers of Paris because they did not follow his advice but, on the contrary, treated these events with greatest attention and as an active participator. In watching with great attention every move in the struggle of the Parisian workers, Marx speaks with great enthusiasm about the historic initiative of the French proletariat which destroyed the old State machine and created a new type of a State. «What elasticity, what historic initiative, what ability for self-sacrifice these Parisians had», he wrote in April 1871, «History does not know such heroism».

But Marx not only admired the historic initiative of the masses, but he also criticized these masses at the same time, criticizing with the stern determination of a proletarian revolutionist. «The cause of the Commune», he stated, «is the greatest heroic deed of the proletariat even if it will be crushed by the wolves, pigs and hounds of the old society». But while appreciating so highly the cause of the Commune, Marx did not conceal from the proletariat a single mistake of the Commune» (*Lenin*). In the same letter in April 1871 he wrote: «If they will be defeated, it will be due to nothing else but their 'generosity'». It was necessary to march immediately on Versailles as soon as Voinoix and, following him, the reactionary section of the Parisian National Guard fled from Paris. A moment was lost on account of generosity. *They did not want to begin the civil war*, as though the hideous degenerate Thiers had not already begun it with his attempt to disarm Paris! Second mistake: the Central Committee resigned its authority too early in order to give place to the Commune. Again, due to the, 'honesty' which was reduced to 'over-anxiety'. In the Manifesto of the General Council of the International on the civil war in France, Marx, while explaining in detail to the world proletariat the significance of the great heroic deed of the Commune at the same time exposed in detail all of its mistakes, in order, that on the basis of these mistakes as well as of the achievements of the Commune the proletariat might learn how to struggle.

Marx utilized every possibility to establish contact with the Commune, in order to maintain its cause.

«In relation to your cause I have written several hundred letters to all parts of the world, where our organizations exist», Marx informs the Communards *Frankel* and *Varlin*. In his directives addressed to Paris and to the provinces — Lyons, Rouen and other cities, where unions of the International existed, Marx gave concrete instructions for immediate action. For instance, on April 4th he recommended to the Parisian section to send delegates to all the large centres of Paris. Marx gave detailed instruction about the defence of Paris from the enemies. In the letter to the members of the Commune he demanded the strengthening of the Northern section of the hills of Montmartre which were surrounded by the Prussians, as the Prussians could permit the Versaillesians to go through. The course of events have shown how true were the fears of Marx. Marx forewarned the Communards about the agreement between Thiers and Bismarck and the promise

of the latter to help in suppressing the Commune. He warned the Commune about the danger of wasting time on petty details. He branded with hatred such renegades of the Commune as Tolen who, being member of the International, was sitting in the Versailles National Assembly.

As Lenin points out, «Marx was a participant in the mass struggle of the Commune». The active participation of Marx in the work of the Commune, his articles in the press in defence of the Commune, the exposure of the slanders which the bourgeoisie was spreading about the Commune, — aroused a mad hatred of the bourgeoisie against Marx. This hatred reached its heights when the Manifesto of the General Council on the civil war in France, written by Marx, was published. This production of Marx, as Lenin states, «up to the present time serves as the best directive in the struggle for heaven<sup>1</sup> and the most horrible scare-crow for the liberal and radical pigs'. The Manifesto was published in the name of the General Council. But when the bourgeoisie began to seek out the author of the «Manifesto», Marx openly declared that he was the author. The bourgeois press answered this declaration with a severe cry. The prostituted bourgeois writers flung at the head of Marx their entire collection of slander and mud. But this wild madness of the enemies initiated against his name only amused the old leader of the proletariat. «I spit at these rogues», — stated Marx, «I even enjoy, «he admitted» when after so many years of swampy calmness a fight begins». The bourgeoisie was unable either to bend or to break Marx.

When the Commune was drowned in blood, Marx worked without rest to help the Communards who were saved from the brutality of the bourgeoisie. He took care to organize the court defence of the Communards during the trials, organized collections of money for the Communards, helped those who were in exile in England, etc.

#### **The Commune and the Capitalist World.**

While the Commune in Paris was making its steps from capitalism towards Socialism, in Versailles, Thiers was feverishly preparing for an attack. The class interest of the bourgeoisie and of the Prussian junkers was stronger than national hatred. Bismarck himself proposed to Thiers his cooperation for the suppression of the Paris rebellion and very accomodatingly released from captivity tens of thousands of soldiers and officers of the old imperialist army. Marshal MacMahon who surrendered Sedan was sent by Bismarck to assist Thiers and was placed there at the head of the Versaillians forces.

#### **The Struggle of the Commune against Versaillians.**

According to the statement of Marx, the Commune was too «generous». It procrastinated in taking measures against the open counter-revolutionists, their accomplices, against the officials who were carrying on sabotage. It was too late in closing various reactionary newspapers and only towards the close of April, in retaliation against the shooting and brutality of the Versaillians it began to arrest bourgeois adherents of Versailles, who were still in Paris.

<sup>1</sup> In this case Lenin has in view the phrase from the letter of Marx to Kugelmann in which Marx states that the Parisian Communards are storming heaven.

On the 21st of May, at 3 o'clock, the first detachments of the Versaillians broke through the ruins of the St. Cloix gates. The National Guardsmen who were captured by the Versaillians, were subjected to humiliation and shot by the Versaillians on the spot. When one of the members of the Commune proposed as a reprisal against this the application of severe measures in relation to the counter-revolutionists and bourgeois hostages who were arrested in Paris, the Commune rejected this proposal without any discussion.

Only on May 23rd the Commune decided to undertake severe measures in retaliation against the brutality of the Versaillians, four hostages were shot on the order of Rigo, the prosecutor of the Commune. But nevertheless the iron hand of the proletariat still felt very weak. *The absence of a leading party was felt in all the work of the Commune; indecisiveness, softheartedness and internal struggle weakened the forces of the Commune.*

**The Differences  
within the  
Commune.**

This internal struggle between the Jacobin-Blanquist majority and the Proudhonist minority began shortly after the election of the Commune. Already during the discussion on the report on supplementary elections to the Commune which took place on April 16th, some of the elected members did not receive a sufficient number of votes due to the fact that the electors did not participate. Therefore, the credentials committee proposed to recognize all those candidates elected to the Commune, who received more than half of all the votes cast, independent of the number of electors. The minority protested and demanded a strict observation of the law of 1849. This demand of the minority was evidently observed in-as-much as it was impossible to demand the presence of all electors at a time when a considerable section of them were at the battle front of the civil war. A second attack of the minority took place on May 1st in the discussion and vote on the question of the establishment of the Committee of Public Safety which had to be endowed with large dictatorial authority. At that time 17 members of the Commune protested against every «dictatorial power» which, they alleged, was depriving the people of their rights. The minority again exposed a stupid lack of understanding of the conditions of the civil war under which the Commune had to act and which required speedy and decisive measures, without wasting much time on prolonged discussion of questions. On the 16th of May the minority went still further and 22 members of the Commune published a declaration in the newspapers that they were leaving the Commune as a protest against the establishment of dictatorship and the action of the Committee of Public Safety. When the Commune at its session adopted a resolution condemning the splitting activity of the minority, some members of the minority attempted to appeal to the masses over the head of the Commune, i. e. attempted actually to split the united front of workers against the Versaillian hangmen. The masses met the splitting activity of the minority with antagonism compelling it to return to the Commune. But the result of the splitting work of the minority undoubtedly led to the weakening of the forces of the commune in the face of the enemy.

**The Commune  
and the French  
Banks.**

A big mistake of the Commune consisted in «the reverence with which it respectfully stopped before the French bank.» A considerable share of the fault for this mistake of the Commune again fell to the minority.

In the bank were preserved gigantic reserves of gold of the French bourgeoisie, the Versaillians were receiving money from the bank, but the Commune did not dare to lay its proletarian hand upon the bank and left the old director and the old guard in the bank, appointing only its commissar who in reality only facilitated in preserving the safety of capital of the French bourgeoisie. Altogether the bank had 3 billion francs in gold and banknotes and in valuable papers, of which 1 billion 300 million francs were in gold and banknotes.

During the entire time of its existence the Commune received from the bank only 16 million francs while during the same time the Versaillians received from the same bank 257 million, or 15 times more

Under the very eyes of the Commune the French bank was supplying money to the Versaillians without any hindrance.

If the Commune had taken possession of the bank, then the French bourgeoisie would have begun to exert pressure on the government of Versailles demanding from it the conclusion of peace with the Commune.

**The Bloody  
May Week and  
the Fall of the  
Commune.**

Towards the end of May, in spite of the heroism of the Parisian men and women workers, who demonstrated supreme self-sacrifice in defending the city, the enemy was coming into the suburbs and a number of southern forts were subjected to severe bombardment by the Versaillians.



Dombrowsky, the Commander of the armies of the Commune.

The Versaillian troops broke into Paris on Sunday May 21st. On the same day they succeeded in treacherously capturing the Southern gates of Paris, the gates of St. Cloix and rapidly moved forward into the heart of the Western bourgeois districts of the city. The most bloody street battles, ever known in history, began.

As the Versaillians moved towards the centre of the city, and particularly towards the Eastern workers' districts, the resistance of the Communards became more and more stubborn. Gigantic barricades stood in the way of the soldiers of the bourgeoisie. The workers and artisans of Paris — men, women and even children — defended their power and their freedom with arms.

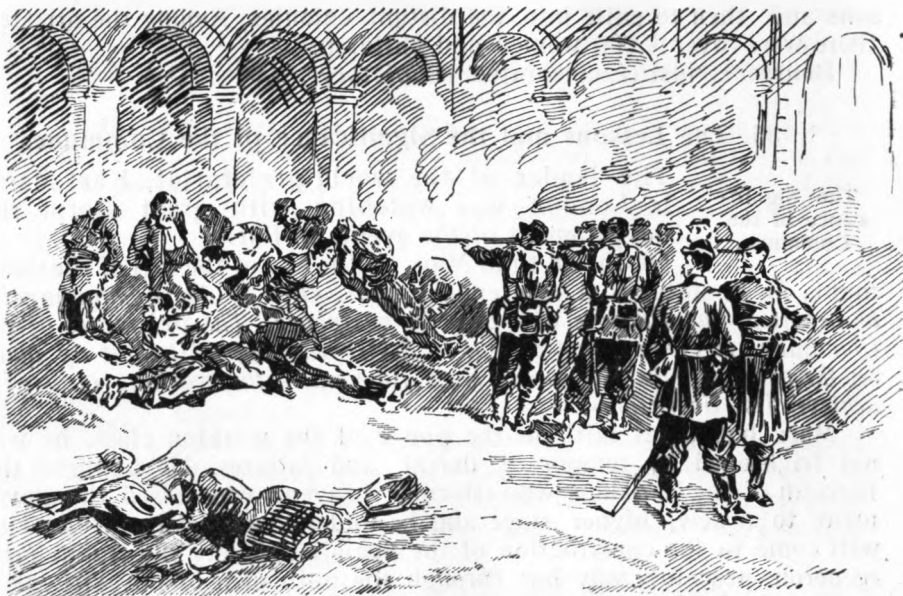
«In the last battle, which lasted for 48 hours, the Parisian population demonstrated the entire energy of which it was capable», we read in the last number of the «Official Gazette» of the Commune. «The children built barricades, which their fathers defended, while women and even mothers with guns in hand kept up the spirit of men, not only by words but also by example».



On Wednesday May 24th the Versaillians succeeded in capturing the City Hall. Possessing great forces they gradually began to surround the workers' quarters and finally on Sunday May 28th they encircled with a ring of fire the last defenders of the Commune in the region of Rompono street.

Already long before the last days of the Paris Commune, the horrors of white terror began, before which the mass executions of the June days of 1848 paled into insignificance.

The captured Communards were shot by the hundreds, the soldiers and the officers of the Versaillian army not only shot the Communards but tortured their victims in every possible way. The class sword of the bourgeoisie struck with the same force all the proletariat of Paris,



The shooting of Communards.

the hangmen respected neither the sex nor age of the Communards. Men and women, workers and women workers, and even the children — all of them were condemned to one bloody fate by their class enemy. «The Communards must be hunted down», — wrote one of the Versaillian papers. «We must trap as wild beasts those who went into hiding», — wrote another paper. «Not a single one of the villains who held Paris in their hands during these two months, will be viewed as political offenders, they will be treated as robbers, which they are», — Another counter-revolutionary paper wrote calling for destruction of Communards.

The hangmen were treating with particularly refined brutality the leaders of the working class who fell into their hands. Here is the way Varlin was executed, one of the best representatives of the working class of Paris. Varlin did not succeed in escaping. He was recognized by a priest who immediately turned him over to an officer. «For

a whole hour Varlin was led around the winding streets of Montmartre with his hands tied at the back, offensive and deriding remarks were showered upon him. His curly head with the forehead of a thinker, full of fraternal thoughts, was slashed with a sword and was transformed into one bloody piece of meat... Somehow, he managed to reach the street of Rosier but could not walk any further and had to be carried. He had to be seated in order to be shot»<sup>1</sup>.

The bourgeois women visited the jails in order to humiliate the prisoners, to watch the execution of heroic Communards, to torture the executed dying communards with the tips of their umbrellas.

The number of all those who perished and were shot during the bloody May week has not been established. There were not less than 30,000. 38,000 were arrested by the Versaillians and sent to the prisons and then to exile into the distant colonies. Among the arrested there were over 1,000 women and children.

Bourgeois justice celebrated its victory.

### 35. The Lessons and the Significance of the Commune.

#### The Significance of the Commune.

The leader of the world proletariat, Karl Marx, in London was watching with great alarm the development of the events in Paris.

On the 28 th of May, on the eve of the fall of the Commune, Marx states that «the end is near». *«But if the Commune will be defeated, the struggle will only be postponed. The principles of the Commune are eternal and cannot be destroyed, they will come up again on the order of the day until such time when the working class will achieve its liberation».*

Marx had great faith in the power of the working class, he was not frightened by temporary defeat and failures. He admired the heroism of the Parisians who «stormed heaven», who raised the movement to a new, higher stage and he understood that the proletariat will come to the construction of the Socialist society not through the «generous-peaceful» way but through the path of a bloody struggle.

Marx valued very highly the experience of the Commune and attributed to it world historic significance. The Commune was the first proletarian dictatorship experienced in the history of the world, it was an entirely new type of State, the forerunner of the Soviet power.

*The struggle of the working class against the class of capitalists entered a new stage, — emphasized Marx, — no matter what the immediate outcome this time, a new starting point, which has a world historic significance, has nevertheless been conquered.*

In the «Problems of Leninism» comrade Stalin gives a classical formulation of the Paris Commune as the inception of Soviet power.

*«Thus the republic of Soviets is the long sought and at length discovered political form within whose framework the economic emancipation of the proletariat, the complete triumph of socialism will be ultimately realized.*

*The Commune of Paris was the germ of this political form, the Soviet power is its culmination.»*

<sup>1</sup> Lissagaray, The History of the Commune.

In this way we are the heirs and the prolongators of the great cause of the Commune.

«We all, in our movement, stand on the shoulders of the Commune», pointed out Lenin in emphasizing that «The Commune taught the European proletariat to place concretely the tasks of the Socialist revolution».

The significance of the heroic struggle of the «immortal» fighters and martyrs of the Commune consists in the fact that they defended the first class struggle of the proletariat in history, the dictatorship of the proletariat, which was indicated by Marx and Engels already during the period of the 1848 revolution.

But Marx and Engels not only foretold the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Commune was «the most glorious page in the history of the 1st International», led by them, it was «the most glorious heroic deed of the Party of Communists since the June uprising of 1848.»

In familiarizing ourselves with the heroic struggle of the Parisian communards, who were «ready to storm heaven», we must not at the same time forget that the Commune was only the *inception* of the Soviet power, that it took place in a period when the proletariat was not yet sufficiently mature, was not united into one party, that we must learn not only on the basis of the immortal gains of the Commune, but also from its mistakes, must take into account its entire experience which has been ingeniously generalized in the works of the founders and teachers of Marxism.

**The Lessons of the Commune.** What are the basic and the main lessons of the Commune?

First of all it showed that *«the working class cannot simply take hold of the ready made state machinery, and wield it for its own purposes»* (Marx). The Commune has shown that *the working class must smash and break the state machinery and not limit itself simply to the capture of this machinery.*

Secondly, the Commune by the very fact of its existence has shown *what must replace this broken State machinery of the bourgeoisie. It has shown in what concrete forms the organization of the proletariat as a ruling class will be expressed and in which way this organization will be combined with the most complete and consistent conquests of democracy.*

We know that just these two main basic lessons of the Commune were assimilated by the Russian workers who were led by Lenin and the Party of the Bolsheviks. They took into account the experience of the Commune, at all stages of the Russian revolution, and built on its strategy and tactics, taking into account its mistakes and lessons. And it is just this that helped the Russian proletariat to crown with the victory of October, the May defeat of the Communards.

*Only the bolsheviks correctly estimated and estimate the experience of the revolution of the 18th of March 1871; international social-fascism always maintains silence, to satisfy the bourgeoisie, on the heroic deeds of the Communards, and distorts them. The notorious German right social-democrat revisionist Volmar declared at the Stuttgart Congress of Social-Democracy (1893) that «the French workers would*

have better served their cause if on the morning of March 18 th, 1871, they had simply slept.»

Both *Bernstein* and *Kautsky* — the leaders of the Second International — and the Russian Mensheviks *Akimov* and *Marlov* either refused to see in the Commune the dictatorship of the proletariat or agreed with Volmar that it is necessary to renounce the armed uprising and limit activity only to participation in the bourgeois Parliament.

The most important lessons and experiences of the Commune were correctly perceived only by the Bolshevik Party and by the Comintern. These lessons are of very great importance for the world proletariat. The revolution of March 18th, 1871, clearly showed that *without a strong, disciplined, united proletarian party it is impossible to achieve victory and that only the merciless (without any «excessive generosity») suppression of the bourgeoisie and its agents can insure the victory of socialism.*

**The International after the Commune.**

Through the Manifesto on the civil war in France, written by Marx, the International accepted the entire heritage of the Commune, declaring it the possession of the world proletariat. «The workingmen's Paris, with its Commune will be forever celebrated as the glorious harbinger of the new society; its martyrs are enshrined in the great heart of the working class. History has already nailed its exterminators to that eternal pillory from which all the prayers of the priests will not redeem them.» The open defence of the cause of the Commune by the International, the propaganda of its experience in the ranks of the workers, the appeal to follow its example, aroused the mad hatred of the bourgeoisie towards the International and its leader — Marx. In France the organization of the International was broken up, the Spanish Government prohibited the existence of sections of the International in Spain. Negotiations were going on between the governments of capitalist countries about simultaneous outlawing of the International in all countries and even in England, the reactionaries reported the International to the Parliament demanding that decisive measures be taken against it. The International was charged with every conceivable crime. In ridiculing the hounding of the International by the bourgeoisie, Marx stated that soon the International will be charged with organizing the earth-quake in California.

Under such circumstances of wild persecution a Conference of the International met in London in September 1871 to decide a number of questions regarding the organization of the International under the condition of severe persecution and to indicate the immediate tasks confronting the international workers movement after the fall of the Commune. The conference reviewed the Constitution, supplemented with organisational decisions of previous congresses, adopted a decision of organization of the International in those countries where its legal existence was prohibited. The conference drew for the working class the most important conclusions from the experience of the Commune. The main misfortune of the Commune lay in the absence of a truly revolutionary Party of the French proletariat, capable

of heading its struggle, and for this reason the conference decided to remind all the members of the International that the economic movement and political activity are inseparably bound together in the struggle of the working class, and put forth before the working class of all countries the task of the speedy creation of an independent political Party.

The attack of the bourgeoisie against the General Council of the International was initiated by the Bakuninists. They decided to take advantage of the favourable (to them) circumstances. They also initiated a campaign against the General Council, charging it with throwing the working class movement of the correct path by driving it along the path of political struggle and the conquest of the proletarian dictatorship. In sensing the support of the bourgeoisie, the anarchists freely sling mud and dirty slander against the General Council and Marx. They exerted great effort in order to distract the workers' movement from the path which was pointed out to it by the General Council and the experience of the Commune. Under such circumstances it was impossible to tolerate the Bakuninists any longer within the ranks of the International. Their further toleration would mean the toleration within our ranks of an enemy who tries to disorganize our ranks in the face of danger. They had to be thrown out. And this was done at the Hague Congress of the International in 1872.

The Hague  
Congress of  
1872.

Marx and the majority of the General Council which followed him gained an upper hand at the Congress held in Hague in 1872. The Congress confirmed the decision of the London Conference about organization of the proletarian Party, deciding that «in their struggle for liberation the workers can come out as a class only by uniting into a political party.»

Bakunin and his adherents were expelled from the International and Engels wrote the following in describing the reasons for the measure:

*If in Hague we would have acted in a conciliatory manner, had we passed up the maturing of the split, what would have been the consequences? The sectarians, i. e. the Bakuninists, would have gained for their disposal an extra year in order to commit in the name of the International still further stupidities and abominable acts. The workers of the most advanced countries would then turn away from us with disgust. In that case the International would really perish, it would perish from 'unity'. Instead of that we have creditably separated from the rotten elements».*

«The movement of the proletariat inevitably passes through various stages of development, and at each stage, part of the people who are unable to go further, remain behind»,— Engels completes this thought.

In summing up the results of the Hague Congress Marx dwelt upon the significance of the Commune and the International and stated: «As far as I am concerned, I will continue to work over my task, the creation of such a mighty solidarity of the workers. No, I will not leave the International, and my remaining life, as well my entire preceding work will be devoted to the victory of the social ideas which, I am convinced, will some day lead to the domination of the proletariat.»

And at the same Congress it was decided to transfer the General Council of the International from Europe to the USA. This decision was brought about by the fact that it was no longer possible to leave the General Council in London. The Government and police were smashing the organizations of the International in all countries. Normal contact with these organizations, their normal representation in the General Council, was impossible. And under these conditions the General Council was in danger of being captured by antagonistic groups. This could have been done, with the support of the bourgeoisie, by the Anarchists, who wanted to capture the General Council. It could have also been captured by the Blanquists, who wanted to transform the International into a conspiratorial organization, etc. It would have been a crime to surrender the militant banner of the International which enjoyed great authority among the workers, into the hands of the intriguers of tendencies antagonistic to the International. Under such conditions the Congress preferred to transfer the General Council to the USA.

After being transferred to North America the International virtually ceased its existence and in 1876 at the Congress in Philadelphia a decision was adopted for temporarily ceasing the activity of the International.

The attempts of the Bakuninists to establish their own International had no success in the working masses and their organization soon fell to pieces. The last attempt of the Anarchists to call a Congress was made in 1881 but ended in failure inasmuch as this Congress in London was attended not by the representatives of the Parties but merely by the representatives of various circles.

The Significance of the First International.

The significance of the First International lies in the fact that *«it laid the foundation for the International organization of workers for the preparation of their revolutionary offensive against capital.»* It laid the foundation *«for the international proletarian struggle for socialism»* (L e n i n). The International Workingmen's Association was the first international proletarian Party organization. The International was founded on the principles of scientific Communism, and, in the struggle against opportunism of the old pre-Marxian Socialist currents the basic problems of the programme and tactics of the proletarian Party were worked out.

The activity and the leadership of the 1st International taught the workers *to coordinate their economic struggle with the political struggle* in the course of the class struggle against the bourgeoisie, the struggle which leads, as it was proven by the experience of the Paris Commune, to the Dictatorship of the proletariat. The International gave an example of struggle for the basic principles of the International proletarian Party, built on the basis of democratic centralism. By the expulsion from the International of the Bakuninists, who violated the Party principles and discipline, who treacherously preserved within the International their secret factional organisation, the International has shown an example of its decisive struggle for the elimination of the anti-Party elements.

The leadership of the strike movement by the International and



the coordination during these strikes of the activity of workers of various countries have shown to the workers in actual practice the significance of international solidarity in their class struggle.

And finally in the national sections of the International Workingmen's Association were forged those cadres which later on became the organizers of the mass Marxian parties.

The mass workers' movement in the capitalist countries began to develop on the basis of the experience of struggles of the proletariat in 1848, on the basis of the heritage of the 1st International and of the Commune.

Following this *the workers' movement grew and extended rapidly and mass socialist workers' parties were created in the various countries*. At the same time, the process of formation of a mass organization of the proletariat, the drawing in of new cadres which were not assimilated in the general factory melting pot, was connected with *the strengthening of opportunism (bourgeois influence) in the ranks of the workers' movement* and in the struggle against which the further development of the labour movement is proceeding. The struggle of Marx, on two fronts, against opportunist theory and the practice of pre-Marxian Socialism, was carried over from the International into the Socialist Parties of the various countries where it continued in a new form. Here the struggle on two fronts against reformism, which came out disguised, under the flag of Marxism, is carried on by the best representatives of the proletariat under the direct leadership of its tested leaders — Marx and Engels. This great wealth of experience of the 1st International was entirely assimilated and enriched by the experiences of the struggle under new conditions by the Bolsheviks and the 3rd International, under whose leadership the international proletariat is now fighting for the world Commune.

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# ERRATA

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Efimov and Frelberg.

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А. Ефимов и Н. Фрейберг

ИСТОРИЯ

Эпоха промышленного капитализма

*Для 7 и 8 классов средней школы*

*Учебник для детей иностранных рабочих*

*На английском языке*